Metro Manila, GenSan bombing suspect arrested

STORY ON PAGE A2

Clinic mix-up: White couple, black twins

LONDON—A historic legal battle is brewing in Britain after a white couple who underwent fertility treatment had black twins in an in-vitro fertilization (IVF) mix-up, according to

CLINIC/A18

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

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Move over Dirty Harry, Duterte's here

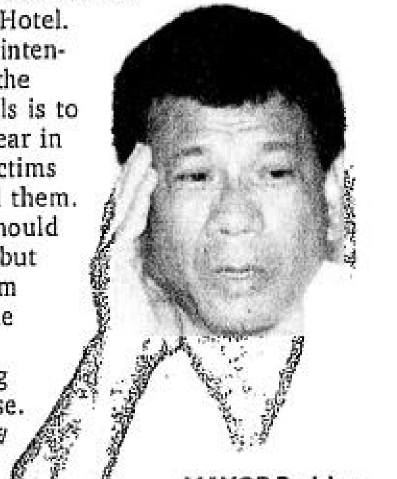
By TJ Burgonio and Dona Pazzibugan

QUOTING the Bible's passage "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth," Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte said yesterday that summary execution of criminals remained the most effective way to curb kidnapping and illicit drugs.

Duterte, an anti-crime consultant, made the proposal before President Macapagal-Arroyo, Interior Secretary Joey Lina, national police chief Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. and members of the Chinese-Filipino community at a crime summit in the Manila Hotel.

"The intention of the criminals is to instill fear in their victims and kill them. What should we do, but kill them also," he said, eliciting applause.

MOVE/ A19



MAYOR Rodrigo Duterte: Biblical solution

EDWIN BACASMAS

GMA: It's all-out war vs 21 kidnap gangs

ERIK ARAZAS

HE SAID, she said: PNP chief, Deputy Director General Hermogenes Ebdane and Citizens Action Against Crime head Teresita Ang-See at the anti-kidnapping summit.

By TJ Burgonio and Dona Pazzibugan

LAUNCHING a new high-profile crackdown on kidnappings, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday ordered the Philippine National Police to neutralize 21 kidnap-for-ransom gangs.

"I just want to make it clear . . . it's all-out war against 21 KFR syndicates," she declared at the anti-kidnapping summit held at the Manila Hotel.

Three of these syndicates are considered most active, so intelligence efforts will be concentrated on them, the President said.

Police officials refused to divulge the names of the groups and their areas of operation, saying the information was "top secret and confidential." The PNP will be conducting another workshop in a few days to update the list of kidnap groups, the INQUIRER also learned.

A source said, however, that one of the three most active syndicates was the Villaver group, responsible for the kidnapping of businessman Victor Castañeda, Romeo Panganiban, Mary Grace Cheng Rosales (daughter of Uratex owner Robert Cheng), Connie Wong, Michele Dee Santos (granddaughter of taipan Alfonso Yuchengco) and Michael Ng in 2001.

The group's take from ransom payments was estimated at P56 million. It operates in Metro Manila.

The alleged gang leader, Rolando Villaver, was arrested together with two other suspects in Alaminos, Laguna, last December. Despite his arrest, the group is still considered active because some members are still at large.

If there is new information on other kidnap gangs, the President said, then

GMA/A19

'Why sleep with enemy?'

Civil society groups confront GMA Cabinet on Ople, Punos

JOAN BONDOC

(CLOCKWISE) Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo; Cecille Alvarez, Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas, presidential adviser Marita Jimenez, Copa sec-gen Pastor Boy Saycon

By Fe Zamora, Carlito Pablo, Norman Bordadora and Rocky Nazareno

AS TYPHOON "Gloria" stormed the metropolis, the other Gloria was herself caught in a downpour of criticisms.

Leaders of civil society groups who helped install President Macapagal-Arroyo in power confronted members of the her Cabinet led by Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo with the question: "Why are you sleeping with the enemy?"

They were referring to the administration's impending appointment of Sen. Blas Ople to replace outgoing Foreign Secretary Teofisto Guingona Jr. and the recruitment of three other former officials of deposed President Joseph Estrada.

"Sleeping with the enemy" and the Guingona issue topped the six items on the agenda during the highly charged, three-hour meeting on Monday afternoon held at the Ayala-run Heritage Foundation Library in.

It was attended by seven Cabinet members and about 50 representatives from civil society, including Kongreso ng Mamamayang Pilipino (Kompil), Council for Philippine Affairs (Copa), Gomburza and Konsensiya ng Mamamayang Pilipino and Akbayan.

The other items on the agenda were: the sacking of the seven PNP generals for their alleged failure to curb "jueteng" in their areas of responsibility; the rising incidence of kidnapping and other crimes; the purchased power adjustment charge and the coconut levy.

One of the more vocal members of civil society warned that "the President can expect the resignation of some Cabinet mem-

WHY/A4

DENNIS SABANGAL

THE TEMPEST, including that one stirred by civil society groups, seems to be the least of President Macapagal's worries while inspecting the damage wrought by her namesake in Guagua, Pampanga on Tuesday.

Heat on Ople most intense from opposition

By Rocky Nazareno and Juliet Javellana

IT'S not Malacanang's allies, but the opposition that has been putting pressure on Sen. Blas Ople not to accept the post of foreign secretary.

Ople admitted that opposition leader Sen. Edgardo Angara had asked him not to accept the foreign affairs portfolio because this would imperil the hold of the opposition on the Senate majority.

"Angara is bothered by the possibility that should I accept, this would be demoralizing for the opposition," Ople said.

At the House of Representatives, a ranking administration leader asked President Macapagal-Arroyo to consider naming former Sen. Leticia Ramos-Shahani as Vice President Teofisto Guingona's replacement at

HEAT/A7

Palace allots ₱300M for 'Gloria' victims

By Carlito Pablo, Gerald Lacuarta, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau and PDI Central Luzon Desk

PROVINCES and cities reeling from floods and landslides caused by Typhoon "Gloria" and tropical depression "Hambalos" will get P300 million in relief and rehabilitation assistance from Malacañang.

Social Welfare Secretary Corazon "Dinky" Soliman said Central Luzon and Metro Manila were the worst hit by the typhoon.

As Gloria and Hambalos move away from the country, a new typhoon (international code name: "Halong") was monitored 2,500 km east of Mindanao.

"It's heading for Guam. It's still far away from the Philippines," said Prisco Nilo, chief of the weather bureau's forecasting section.

As damage to life and property rose, President Macapagal-Arroyo ordered the release of the P300 million. The death toll from bad weather climbed to 27 yesterday, according to the National Disaster Coordinating Council (NDCC). Damage to agriculture was placed at P94 million. ***(See related story on Page A19.)***

PALACE/A19

Denied coverage, other horror stories

MERCHANTS OF HEALTH

An I TEAM Report

By Jerry Esplanada

(Second of three parts).

DON'T talk to Jessielyn Tabanguil, of Yakal street in Comembo, Makati City, about health maintenance organizations, or HMOs.

On July 27, 1999, Tabanguil's 8-year-old daughter, Jilden, was admitted to the Makati Medical Center, one of the country's top private hospitals. Jilden was diagnosed as suffering from systemic viral infection and acute myocytis. She was discharged on August 3.

The seven-day confinement cost P29,923—including P15,131.88 in pharmacy expenses and P5,587.50 for room and board.

The state-run Philippine Health Insurance Corp. shouldered P6,710 of the hospital bill (representing the patient's Medicare coverage). But Health Plus, the Tabanguils' HMO, did not come to their rescue. Tabanguil had no recourse but to settle the balance of P23,000.

DENIED/A7

Second FRONT PAGE

NASA COMPANY-LEVEL NA!

Metro Manila, GenSan bombing suspect falls

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

ZAMBOANGA—Government troops on Tuesday captured a suspect in the string of deadly bombings that hit Metro Manila in 2000 and Mindanao early this year, officials said.

Hussain Ramos, 35, was arrested in Marawi city after he was implicated by Fathur Rohman Al-Ghozi, an Indonesian, who told police Ramos had helped plan the bombings that killed 22 people in Metro Manila on Dec. 30, 2000 and 16 persons in General Santos City last February.

Al-Ghozi pleaded guilty in April to explosives possession after leading police to a ton of TNT that officials said was to be used for terrorist attacks in Singapore. An army statement said the explosives had been provided by Ramos, also known as Ali Ramos and Abu Ali.

Ramos was presented to President Macapagal-Arroyo at Malacañang last night.

The President congratulated new PNP chief Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. and Philippine Army chief Dionisio Santiago, who brought Ramos to the Palace.

Ramos stood several feet from the President while she read a joint PNP-AFP statement. His hands were handcuffed to two military guards.

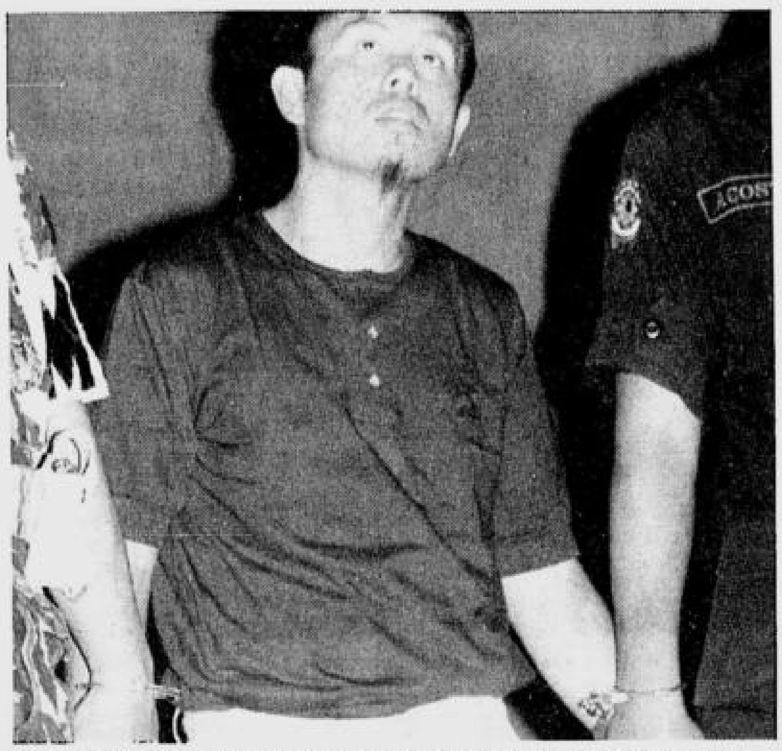
Ebdane said Ramos was arrested for his involvement in the procurement of a ton of explosives last year, which authorities confiscated in General Santos City. "But we're working on his connection to the Dec. 30 Metro Manila bombing," he said.

Ebdane admitted authorities did not find explosives when they arrested Ramos. "We're still looking for another fellow who is still in hiding," he added.

Officials said Ramos was helping members of Jemaah Islamiyah, an Islamic extremist group that authorities say is linked to al-Qaida.

Officials said Jemaah Islamiyah allegedly planned to attack US military personnel and installations, as well as the British High Commission, the Israeli Embassy and the Australian High Commission in Singapore.

During interrogation, Ramos "admitted his participation in the procurement of boxes of explosives sometime during the recent Ramadan (Nov. 15 -Dec. 17) to be transported to Singapore," the statement said.



RAMOS was handcuffed on both wrists as he was presented to the President.
EDWIN BACASMAS

In what appeared to be a reference to Indonesia, Ebdane told a news conference with President Macapagal that the group has links to "some foreigners south of the Philippines... including that of the attempted bombings in Singapore."

With AP, AFP reports

Yanks begin training on company level

UNITED States military advisers have begun training 25 companies of Philippine soldiers and are expected to go on combat patrol with some carefully vetted units before the program concludes at the end of the month, a Pentagon spokesperson said Monday.

American Lt. Commander Jeff Davis said the company-level training, which began over the weekend, will take place on the island of Basilan and on the Zamboanga peninsula.

"We are at company level training now," he said. "The plan is to train 25 different companies for the duration of Balikatan 02-1."

He said the American advisers will accompany only a small number of Filipino companies on tactical operations.

"Those will be very closely controlled situations where we have certified that the company has demonstrated the requisite level of professionalism," he said.

Balikatan 02-1 brought more than 600 US troops to Mindanao to train and assist Filipino soldiers pursuing the Abu Sayyaf, a Muslim rebel group that kidnapped foreigners and Filipinos.

The US troops are scheduled to be withdrawn when the program ends July 31, Davis said. ***Julie S. Alipala, Gerald G. Lacuarta with AFP reports***

Reporter hits inclusion on Abu wanted posters

By Martin P. Marfil

A DEFENSE reporter of The People's Journal wondered yesterday if the phrase "military intelligence" is an oxymoron, after her photo was placed alongside that of notorious Abu Sayyaf leaders on wanted posters.

People's Journal reporter Bernadette Tamayo, 37, said her picture is on posters all over Mindanao where she is listed as an "unidentified ASG personality." ***(See photo on A11.)***

The posters sprouted in the wake of President Macapagal-Arroyo's announcement of a P100-million reward for persons who could lead authorities to the Abu Sayyaf leaders.

"This puts into question all the other photos in the posters. I doubt the capability of the intelligence community to gather intelligence," Tamayo said in Filipino.

This was the second time the intelligence community's use of photos has been questioned.

Earlier, the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines released a photo it said was of alleged drug lord Kim Wong. The picture turned out to be that of Stephen Villaflor, the chief of staff of Sen. Robert Barbers.

According to newsmen covering the Abu Sayyaf, they first noticed the posters with Tamayo's picture in January and they told the military about it.

Tamayo said she learned of the posters only on May 18, during the turnover rites for new AFP chief of staff Gen. Roy Cimatu in Camp Aguinaldo, when Zamboanga City-based journalists told her about it.

She fired off a letter on May 27 to Lt. Col. Daniel Lucero, commanding officer of the 18th Infantry Battalion, where one of the posters was seen.

In it, she said Southern Command spokesperson Capt. Noel Detoyato had confirmed to her that her picture was on the posters and that it had been taken from television footage.

Detoyato had also assured her he had taken steps to have her picture removed from the Order of Battle (OB), she said.

"I would like to know the circumstances of my inclusion in your OB," she said in the letter.

Lucero acknowledged receipt of the letter but merely texted Tamayo, saying she "was not in (our) OB."

She said she never received a formal reply from Lucero.

On Sunday, a photojournalist sent Tamayo a poster, which he received in mid-June that still included her photo, prompting her to come out with her story.

"I got angry when I saw it, I still can't believe that they did not do anything," Tamayo said yesterday.

According to Tamayo, since she first heard of her photo in the posters, "I was unable to sleep the first few days. Later I noticed that my lifestyle had changed, I was unable to go out alone at nights." She said she was contemplating taking legal action.

Asked to comment, defense public information chief Ros Manlangit said they "will look into it."

According to Tamayo, the photo that appeared on the posters was taken on May 23, 2000 in Patikul, Sulu.

In it, Commander Robot had his arm on her shoulder and they were surrounded by media men and Abu Sayyaf members.

The visit was in connection with the Sipadan hostage crisis.

Tamayo has been a journalist with the Journal group of publications for several years.

RP has up to 2M loose guns

THERE are between 250,000 to 2 million illegal small arms in the country and the reason a more precise number cannot be given, a government official admitted, is the guns are unlicensed.

This much came out at the start of the two-day "Regional Seminar on Implementing the UN Program of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons" yesterday at a Mandaluyong hotel.

The seminar aims to find a solution to the problem of illegal small arms and light weapons trafficking.

The figures were offered up by a Canadian official who addressed the seminar.

Canadian Secretary of State David Kilgour said in his speech, "In the Philippines... there are approximately 775,000 legally registered guns, while police estimate there are some 2 million illegal ones in circulation."

Kilgour said the figures were given to him by a senior police official he did not identify.

He said that reducing the demand for firearms means addressing structural problems like poverty, good governance and the prestige associated with owning a weapon.

Asked to comment, Interior Undersecretary Marius Corpus admitted the estimate of 250,000 to 2 million unrecorded firearms was about right. He also admitted the guns were unlicensed.

Small arms and light weapons include pistols, rifles, machine guns, grenade launchers and shoulder-fired missiles.

These weapons, according to a statement issued during the seminar, were used in 46 major conflicts fought in the 1990s, which claimed the lives of 4 million people.

Of the 4 million deaths, 90 percent were civilians and 80 percent of this were women and children, the statement said.

For Kilgour, the challenge of controlling firearms is complex, but it comes down to the question of supply and demand.

"How to reduce demand remains a necessary consideration when launching supply side initiatives. Reducing the demand for small arms often involves addressing some of the longer term and structural problems in those countries where guns abound," he said.

Martin P. Marfil

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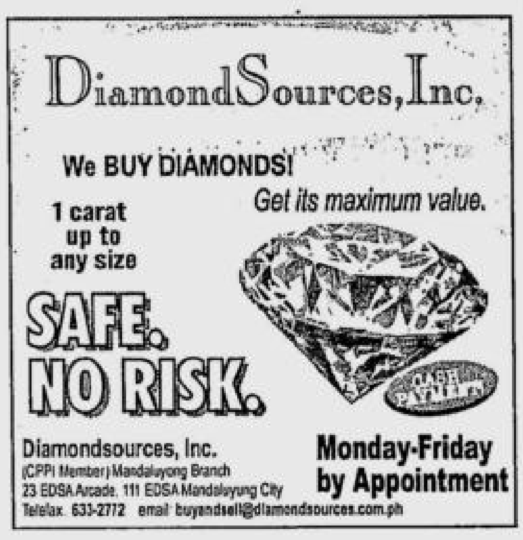

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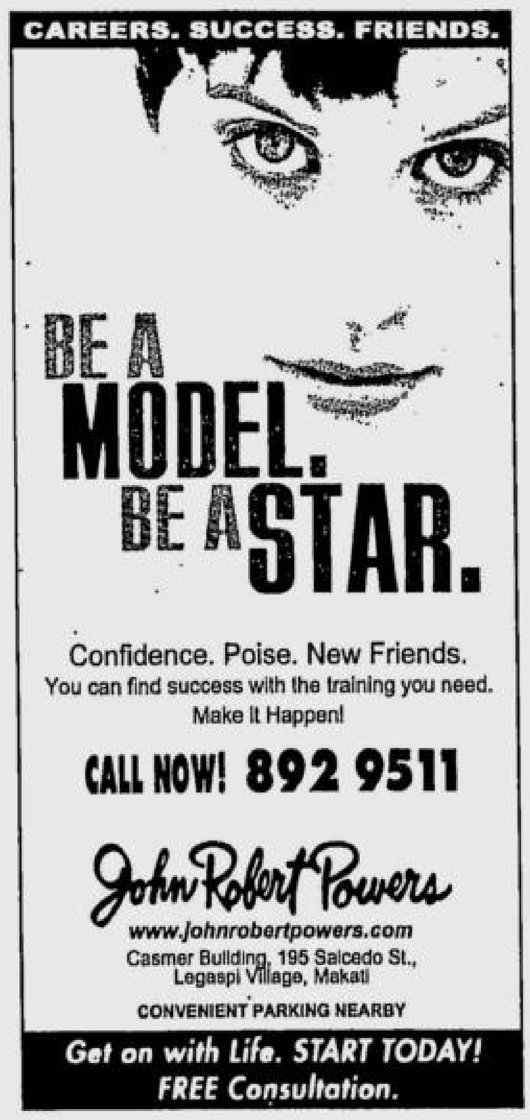

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Bishops hit new round of executions

By A. Nocum

THE CATHOLIC Bishops Conference of the Philippines yesterday raised alarms over plans by President Macapagal-Arroyo to "re-activate" the execution of convicts.

An official of the CBCP's Episcopal Commission on Prison Pastoral Care said in a statement the bishops were concerned about the President's declaration she was willing to "use all weapons" to fight crime, especially kidnappings.

"This is disturbing because it strongly implies that the present dispensation is running berserk in finding a solution to the nation's peace problems," ECPPC Executive Secretary Rodolfo Diamante said. "Since when has the taking away of life become a weapon?"

The President had told Palace reporters in a dinner on Friday the death penalty was a legal weapon that should be employed by the state to address the problem of rising criminality.

The President also indicated she was not inclined to stop the execution of two convicts next month.

The Supreme Court recently affirmed the death sentence on convicted rapist Alfredo Nardo and ordered his execution by lethal injection on Oct. 16. Only a presidential pardon can save death row convicts.

The CBCP said life was a sacred gift and "no person, no society, no state has the right to take it away," adding the government should look instead at the root causes of crime.

"Taking away the life of someone whom we have condemned, immobilized and rendered helpless with contraptions of death is another horrible lesson to teach our children," the bishops said.

The Philippines broke a 23-year moratorium on judicial executions in 1999, when seven convicts were put to death. ***With an AFP report***

Gov't not inclined to cancel IPP deals–Perez

By R. Domingo

"WE would always honor these contracts and explore them on mutually agreeable (terms hoping that) the government could reduce its financial obligations."

With that, Energy Secretary Vincent Perez Jr. said yesterday the government was not inclined to unilaterally cancel, abrogate or renege on any of the contracts with independent power producers (IPPs) that an interagency committee had recommended for renegotiation.

Perez said the committee had assigned 22 contracts for study to the energy department and the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp.

Isssues

Of these, 11 passed the review but had financial issues that need to be addressed to ensure that the government and the public "were not being financially prejudiced."

These were the contracts for the Navotas gas turbine units 1-3, Mindanao power barges, Ormat binary cycle, Iligan I diesel, Iligan II diesel, Subic diesel, Bauang diesel, Bataan EPZA plant, San Pascual cogeneration, Ilijan natural gas and Mindanao geothermal plants.

Another 11 contracts had some financial issues that "may require renegotiation of the financial terms."

These cover the Pagbilao coal, Pinamucan diesel, Leyte-Cebu geothermal, Naga coal, Leyte-Luzon geothermal, Mindanao I geothermal, Malaya thermal, Zamboanga diesel, General Santos diesel, Bakun hydroelectric and Mindanao coal plants.

More time

Asked to react on comments that the committee's review was not thorough enough, Perez said: "I think the committee would have liked to have had more time but there was a deadline they had to meet."

The review committee that was headed by Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho had a self-imposed deadline of June 30.

He added the IPP contracts were not being questioned and the IPPs should not go straight to arbitration.

Premature

"These are straightforward financial issues like fixed costs that we could convert to variable costs," he said. "We want to convince them (IPPs) that it is also in their interest to help us reduce the cost of electricity."

Perez also said calls for the "mothballing" of the National Power Corp.'s plants were premature in light of the ongoing assessment of the efficiency of Napocor's facilities.

"It is best to wait for the independent (assessment to determine the status of the plants in terms of) optimal use and cost effectiveness," Perez said in an interview.

He was reacting to calls made by Sen. Renato Cayetano for the shutdown of 11 Napocor plants to cut the cost of the purchased power adjustment (PPA) to its barest minimum or get rid of it.

Perez said the independent assessment was being conducted by a local research group with no interest in the power industry.

"It's not an easy process but at least we can see which plants are really most efficient," he said.

Undermine

For its part, the Philippine Independent Power Producers Association (PIPPA) said in a statement the IPPs would cooperate with the government in finding solutions to the PPA issue and in lowering power costs.

However, the PIPPA cautioned that mishandling of the review and renegotiation of the IPP contracts could undermine investor interest and the country's credit rating, and jeopardize the privatization of Napocor.

At the same time, three unions representing Napocor's employees and executives have declared its president, Jesus Alcordo, "persona non grata."

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"I'd rather not comment on that," Alcordo said in a telephone interview. "I can't win in a media war, I don't have the funds."

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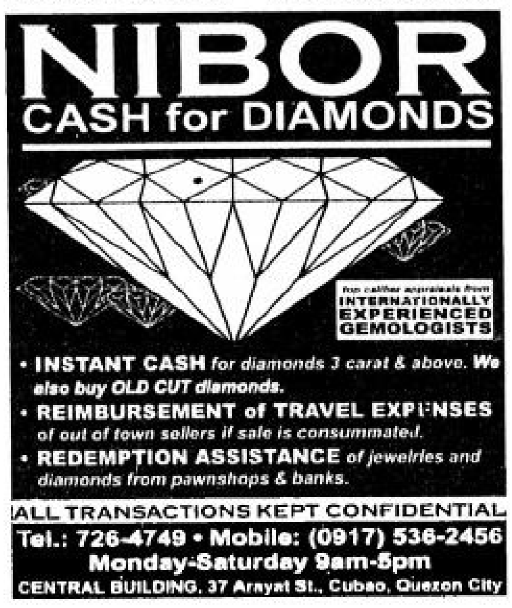
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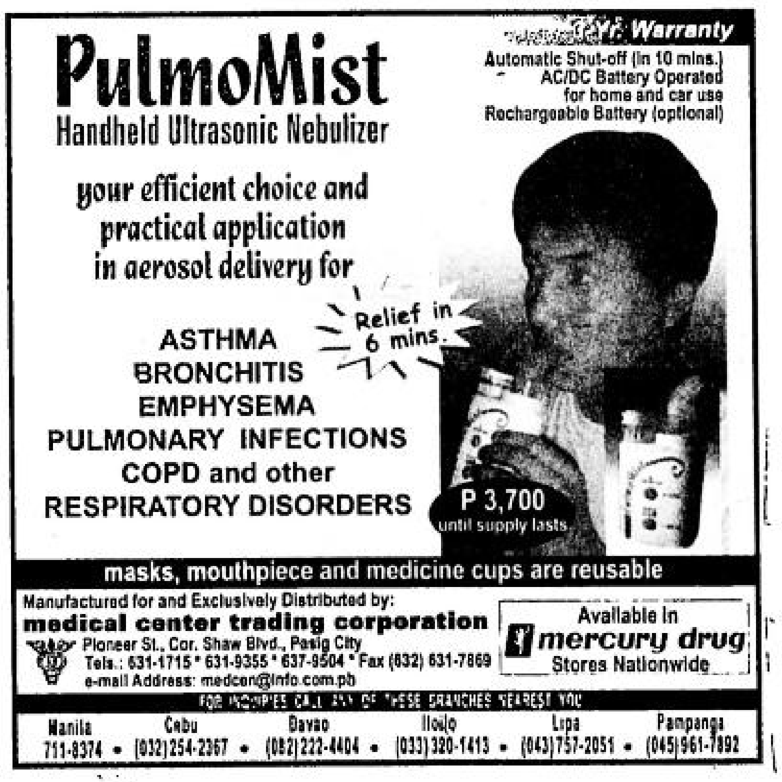
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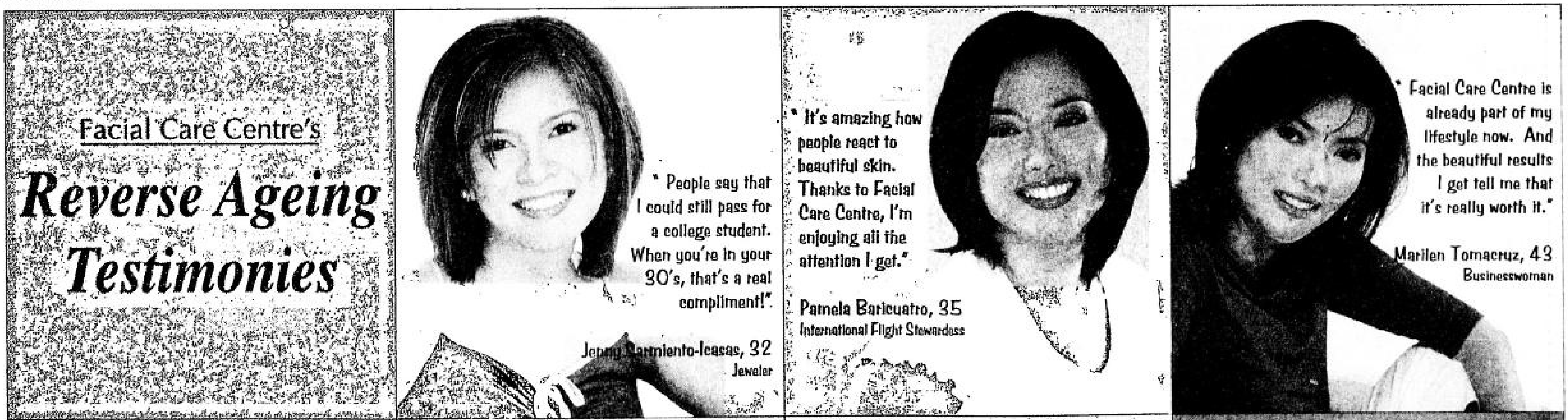
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Bishops hit new round of executions

By A. Nocum

THE CATHOLIC Bishops Conference of the Philippines yesterday raised alarms over plans by President Macapagal-Arroyo to "re-activate" the execution of convicts.

An official of the CBCP's Episcopal Commission on Prison Pastoral Care said in a statement the bishops were concerned about the President's declaration she was willing to "use all weapons" to fight crime, especially kidnappings.

"This is disturbing because it strongly implies that the present dispensation is running berserk in finding a solution to the nation's peace problems," ECPPC Executive Secretary Rodolfo Diamante said. "Since when has the taking away of life become a weapon?"

The President had told Palace reporters in a dinner on Friday the death penalty was a legal weapon that should be employed by the state to address the problem of rising criminality.

The President also indicated she was not inclined to stop the execution of two convicts next month.

The Supreme Court recently affirmed the death sentence on convicted rapist Alfredo Nardo and ordered his execution by lethal injection on Oct. 16. Only a presidential pardon can save death row convicts.

The CBCP said life was a sacred gift and "no person, no society, no state has the right to take it away," adding the government should look instead at the root causes of crime.

"Taking away the life of someone whom we have condemned, immobilized and rendered helpless with contraptions of death is another horrible lesson to teach our children," the bishops said.

The Philippines broke a 23-year moratorium on judicial executions in 1999, when seven convicts were put to death. *With an AFP report*

Gov't not inclined to cancel IPP deals—Perez

By R. Domingo

"WE would always honor these contracts and explore them on mutually agreeable (terms hoping that) the government could reduce its financial obligations."

With that, Energy Secretary Vincent Perez Jr. said yesterday the government was not inclined to unilaterally cancel, abrogate or renege on any of the contracts with independent power producers (IPPs) that an inter-agency committee had recommended for renegotiation.

Perez said the committee had assigned 22 contracts for study to the energy department and the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp.

Isssues

Of these, 11 passed the review but had financial issues that need to be addressed to ensure that the government and the public "were not being financially prejudiced."

These were the contracts for the Navotas gas turbine units 1-3, Mindanao power barges, Ormat binary cycle, Iligan I diesel, Iligan II diesel, Subic diesel, Bauang diesel, Bataan EPZA plant, San Pascual cogeneration, Ilijan natural gas and Mindanao geothermal plants.

Another 11 contracts had some financial issues that "may require renegotiation of the financial terms."

These cover the Pagbilao coal, Pinamucan diesel, Leyte-Cebu geothermal, Naga coal, Leyte-Luzon geothermal, Mindanao I geothermal, Malaya thermal, Zamboanga diesel, General Santos diesel, Bakun hydroelectric and Mindanao coal plants.

More time

Asked to react on comments that the committee's review was not thorough enough, Perez said: "I think the committee would have liked to have had more time but there was a deadline they had to meet."

The review committee that was headed by Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho had a self-imposed deadline of June 30.

He added the IPP contracts were not being questioned and the IPPs should not go straight to arbitration.

Premature

"These are straightforward financial issues like fixed costs that we could convert to variable costs," he said. "We want to convince them (IPPs) that it is also in their interest to help us reduce the cost of electricity."

Perez also said calls for the "mothballing" of the National Power Corp.'s plants were premature in light of the ongoing assessment of the efficiency of Napocor's facilities.

"It is best to wait for the independent (assessment to determine the status of the plants in terms of) optimal use and cost effectiveness," Perez said in an interview.

He was reacting to calls made by Sen. Renato Cayetano for the shutdown of 11 Napocor plants to cut the cost of the purchased power adjustment (PPA) to its barest minimum or get rid of it.

Perez said the independent assessment was being conducted by a local research group with no interest in the power industry.

"It's not an easy process but at least we can see which plants are really most efficient," he said.

Undermine

For its part, the Philippine Independent Power Producers Association (PIPPA) said in a statement the IPPs would cooperate with the government in finding solutions to the PPA issue and in lowering power costs.

However, the PIPPA cautioned that mishandling of the review and renegotiation of the IPP contracts could undermine investor interest and the country's credit rating, and jeopardize the privatization of Napocor.

At the same time, three unions representing Napocor's employees and executives have declared its president, Jesus Alcordo, "persona non grata."

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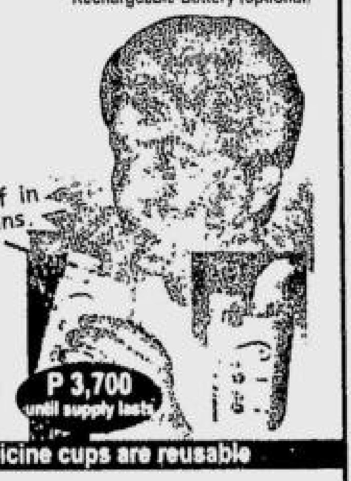
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'Why are you sleeping with the enemy?'

From page A1

bers" should she go ahead with the appointments of Ople and other known—Estrada allies.

A source present at the meeting told the INQUIRER, "Some (civil society members) were saying if this is the situation, what's the point of further supporting the Macapagal administration?"

"It was like they were holding the President hostage with their demands," countered Housing and Urban Development Council Chair Michael Defensor who was present at the meeting.

Defensor noted that the righteous attitude of the civil society groups drew the ire of the usually unflappable Romulo who told them that they "did not have the moral ascendancy to make demands on the President."

"Executive Secretary Romulo said that a lot of members in President Macapagal's Cabinet have also risked their all before and during Edsa II and that this government is committed to good governance," a source told the INQUIRER.

"Most of us (Cabinet members at the meeting) were already in the thick of the fight against Estrada when these civil society groups were yet to be organized," Defensor said.

At one point, a source told the INQUIRER, Labor Secretary Sto. Tomas "expressed sadness because allies of the President are the ones themselves who are hitting her administration instead of just the opposition doing so."

Puno brothers

"It was not the Cabinet that was booed. What was booed was the idea that the Puno brothers (and others) were joining the administration. That was how strong their sentiment was," Teresita Quintos-Deles, lead convenor of the National Anti-Poverty Commission (Napci), said.

But Quintos-Deles maintained there had been no offers for Ople to be foreign secretary. Or, for Ronaldo Puno, Ricardo Puno and Jimmy Policarpio to serve in the Macapagal Cabinet.

The issue about Ople, the Punos and Policarpio was listed in the agenda as "sleeping with the enemy."

Ronaldo Puno served as Estrada's political strategist and interior and local government secretary; Ricardo Puno was press secretary and spokesperson while Policarpio was legislative liaison officer.

"These are all in the media . . . and its being feasted upon," Quintos-Deles said.

But Mr. Jose Miguel Arroyo told the INQUIRER during dinner with INQUIRER editors on Thursday that he had asked the Puno brothers and Policarpio to help the administration.

"The categorical statement that they are not being considered for the position should come from the President herself. Only her statement can put an end to all the doubts," Pastor "Boy" Saycon, Copa secretary general, said.

In the same dinner with the INQUIRER, President Macapagal said that she had initially thought of asking Ronaldo Puno to lend a hand against the campaign against illegal drugs.

The innocents

Saycon rued that Malacañang had sent the "innocent people to the dialogue."

Aside from Romulo, Quintos-Deles, Defensor and Sto. Tomas, the Macapagal administration was represented by Secretaries Jose Camacho (finance), Vincent Perez (energy) Jose Lina (local government) and Marita Magpili-Jimenez (presidential adviser).

Saycon said that Mr. Arroyo, presidential publicist Dante Ang and Bulacan Rep. Willie Villarama should have been present at the meeting to explain their roles in the enlistment of Estrada allies into the Macapagal administration.

"Those sent to the dialogue have nothing to do with these. They were sent to soften the impact . . . because they were friendly and non-confrontational," Saycon said.

Ang and Villarama as confirmed by Ople himself had met separately with the latter in Los Angeles, California, to offer him Guingona's job.

Aside from Mr. Mike Arroyo, Ang and Villarama, Presidential Adviser Avelino Cruz, lawyer Villaraza and former Presidential Management Staff (PMS) head Vicky Garchitorena also have a lot to explain on the Guingona fiasco, according to Saycon.

"The ultimate offer would still come from the President. All the other so-called offers are just mere discussion," Defensor told the INQUIRER after the unprecedented forum.

Defensor himself has no objection to Ople's appointment to the Cabinet. But not that of the Puno brothers.

"Out of the question," he said. "That would be too extreme. If they want to help, they should be allowed to do so from the sidelines and not in an official capacity."

The meeting was arranged by Secretary Marita Jimenez, presidential adviser on the absorption of official development assistance.

Quintos-Deles said the dialogue was organized by Ahon Foundation. But those who were present said they were invited to the dialogue by Jimenez's staff. The attendance logbook was also handled by a Jimenez staffer.

Quintos-Deles said the plan to hold a dialogue with civil society was hatched during the Cabinet meeting on Friday. "We've been hearing rumors and reports, so we decided to sit down with them," she said.

Initially, the plan was for a "small group per Cabinet member" but at the last minute, it was decided to have "one big meeting" preferably without media coverage.

"We want to tell them to believe us. We wouldn't be here if the President doesn't listen, if we don't believe in good governance," Quintos-Deles said.

The dialogue, Quintos-Deles said, achieved its purpose.

"*Nagkalinawan, nagkabukasan ng loob* (We clarified things, we opened up to each other)," she said.

But it wasn't so to Montelibano, Copa spokesperson, who said "Nothing was achieved. Those who came left even more convinced (about the Macapagal administration). They (Cabinet members) acted like the President did not commit mistakes when she herself has admitted her blunders."

After the meeting, leaders representing certain concerns followed up on their pending requests for assistance before government agencies.

'Good meeting'

In an interview, Romulo couched his description of the event as "a good meeting."

Romulo said that civil society members were just expressing their views about possible appointments to the Cabinet and other government agencies.

"They were with us in the struggle so I think we should listen to them," he said.

Romulo said that President Macapagal "is wise enough to consult" her supporters, "she doesn't stifle us," and "that is good."

Romulo, however, stressed: "In the last analysis, we respect the judgment of the President."

Romulo has agreed that there should be more dialogues with the Edsa II forces in the future.

All the Cabinet members promised that communication lines between government and civil society would be made more busy "to ease their feelings that they are being left out," the source said.

Who's who

Aside from Saycon, some of the other civil society leaders present were Danilo Songco, national coordinator of Code-NGO; Msgr. Nico Bautista, Kompil II; Roy Oliveros, Federation of Free Workers; Patricia Sison, Copa and Couples for Christ; Cecille Alvarez, Earth Savers; Joel Rocamora, Bly Montelibano and Marie Guingona, daughter of Vice President Guingona.

Sison is a member of the board of directors of the Cultural Center of the Philippines and her husband Luis, who was also present in the meeting, is the chair of the Philippine National Construction Corp.

Alvarez is the wife of Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez, who, for his part, has been consistently reported as one of those Cabinet members on their way out.

Ms Guingona, according to a source, was quiet during the meeting.

Widespread protest

"Who is the enemy they haven't slept with yet? This is new politics with old faces, old names," Montelibano said.

"It would blur the lines between friends and enemies. Politicians would be wont to ask, 'If I won the battle, why is my enemy getting the prize?'," he said in a telephone interview with the INQUIRER.

While Copa and the rest of civil society have yet to withdraw support from the President, Montelibano warned of widespread protests from the people themselves.

"It would be beyond our hands. All we did was to express our sentiments regarding the resignation of Vice President Teofisto Guingona Jr.," Montelibano added.

"If people gather in the streets to register their protest when Senator Ople is appointed to replace the Vice President, then it would not be of our doing. That would be beyond Copa," he said.

Saycon had already expressed the group's sympathies to Guingona after the latter yielded to the President and resigned his position due to differences in foreign policy objectives.

"It's a big insult to the Vice President," Saycon told reporters when he visited Guingona at his DFA office on the latter's birthday on July 4. Saycon was referring to Malacañang's alleged offer to Ople to replace Guingona.

Saycon and Copa's gripe against Ople is reportedly due to the fact it was the senator who tried to push for the impeachment of Ms Macapagal and Guingona during the early days of the Macapagal administration.

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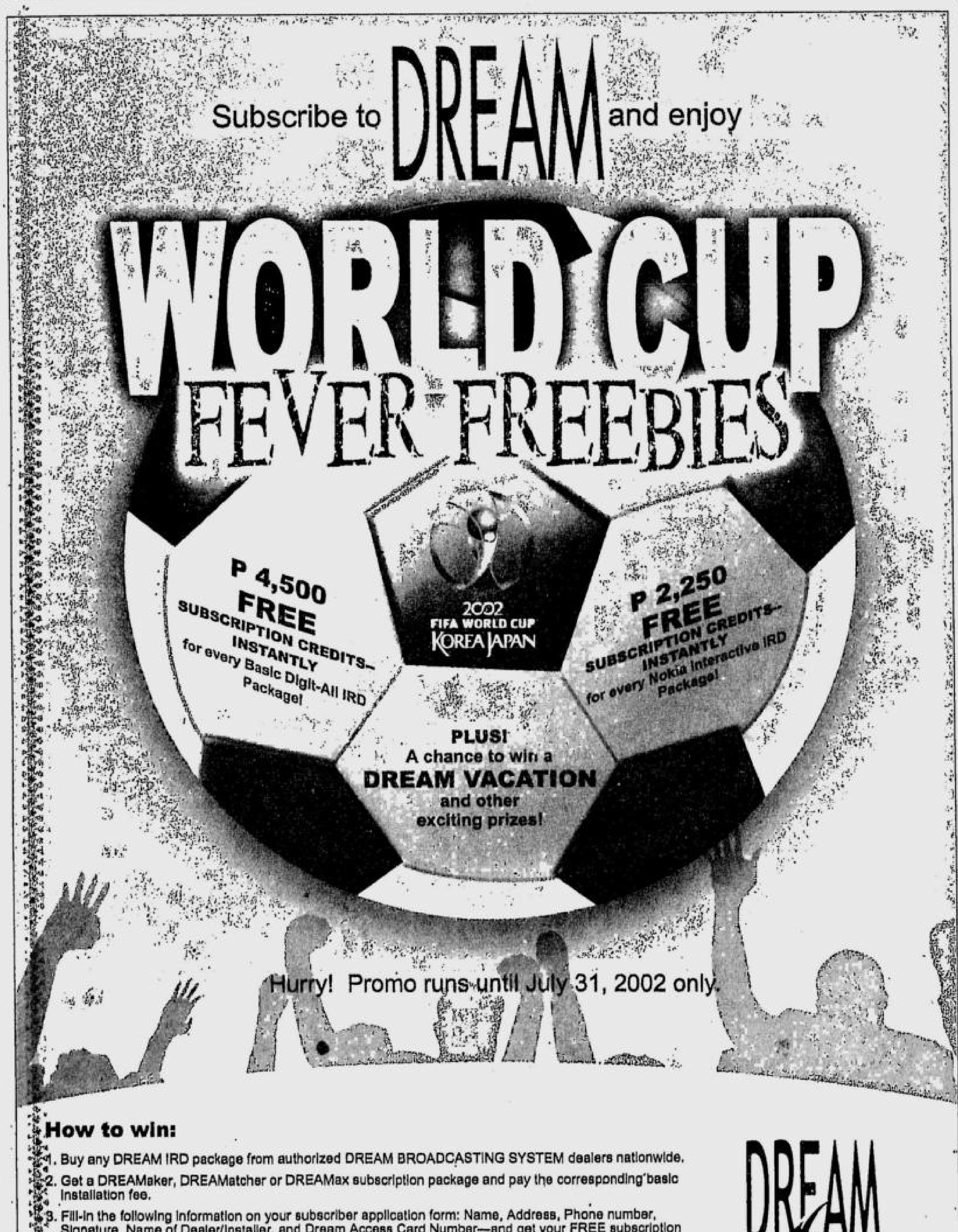
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Business airs grievances

By Clarissa S. Batino

RISING cases of kidnapping, rampant smuggling and runaway population growth topped the list of concerns of 20 business groups invited by the government's economic team to a consultative meeting that quickly turned into a grievance session late Monday.

The business leaders agreed that while the economic achievements of the Macapagal administration had been impressive so far—except for the huge budget deficit—the lingering and unresolved problems of peace and order continued to erode business confidence.

The issue of the declining competitiveness of domestic businesses because of the high cost of electricity was also brought to the table. The country's power rates are the third most expensive in Asia, next only to Japan and Hong Kong.

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho, Trade Secretary Mar Roxas II, Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin, Economic Planning Secretary Dante Canlas organized the roundtable session.

Skeptical

Interior Secretary Joey Lina was brought in to answer the questions on peace and order.

Sergio Ortiz-Luis, president of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the country's biggest business group, said some participants were quite skeptical about the focus on gambling in Lina's anti-crime drive.

"While trying to curb gambling is good, the reorganization of the Philippine National Police should be expanded (to include) kidnapping and other crimes (which are) seen by the business community as discouraging factors," said the PCCI president.

The National Police Commission headed by Lina had fired seven top police officials for their alleged failure to stamp out illegal gambling in their respective jurisdictions.

Donald Dee, president of the Employers Confederation of the Philippines, noted that small companies were being hurt by the rampant smuggling that the Bureau of Customs had failed to address. He said many of these firms have closed shop.

Distraction

"Micro and small enterprises that comprise a big part of Philippine business complain that they have no access to credit, their markets are dwindling, and there's still too much smuggling," said Dee.

Miguel Varela, chair of the PCCI pointed out that instead of focusing on their operations, the business community was being distracted by political and peace-and-order issues.

"The government must focus on economic growth and must have the political will for everybody in the bureaucracy to cooperate," said Varela.

Camacho said the dialogue with the business community was conducted to get "feedback" so President Macapagal-Arroyo would know what to focus on in her State of the Nation Address on July 22.

He explained that the economic team regularly convenes these roundtable sessions to discuss issues that influence the conduct of business in the Philippines.

Business leaders said it was Roxas who opted for a more candid discussion after listening to the presentations of the four economic secretaries for two hours.

3 former ATO execs cleared

THE SANDIGANBAYAN, reversing an earlier ruling, has cleared former Air Transportation Office executive director Bienvenido Manga Jr. and two other ATO officials in a 1995 case of indirect bribery.

A special division, voting 3 to 2, granted the motion of the accused appealing the guilty verdict handed down by the 2nd Division last year.

Dismissed was the case filed against Manga, then ATO Airport Maintenance Section chief Manuel de Leon, and Engineer III Edgardo Costes, in connection with the P8-million Baguio airport rehabilitation project.

The private contractor, Gilberto Tongco, had accused the three of demanding and receiving P20,000 each in bribes for the release of the initial payment for the project on Aug. 16, 1991.

The 2nd Division convicted all the accused in March 2001, giving credence to the testimonies of Tongco and his employee, Lydia Layug, who claimed to have personally delivered the bribe money.

Manga et al were then sentenced to a maximum prison term of three and a half years each.

The Sandiganbayan, in a resolution dated July 3, said the motion for reconsideration raised "a sufficient degree of doubt as to the guilt of the accused."

The new ruling gave weight to the alibis of Manga and Costes who said they were in Gen. Santos City and Baguio City, respectively, on the date Layug allegedly delivered the bribe at the ATO main office in Pasay City. *Volt Contreras*

Filipina jailed for threatening maids

SINGAPORE—A Filipino woman married to a Singaporean was sentenced to six months in jail for threatening to kill three Filipino maids after they complained about work and wanted to return home, the Straits Times newspaper reported yesterday.

The woman, Salvacion Dalayon, 38, was working as an assistant manager of an employment agency here when she made the threats in August last year, the newspaper said.

The maids had gone to the agency to complain about their working conditions and said they wanted to go home.

But they were held against their will and their compatriot told them they would have to pay their contractual sums totaling P70,000 and would have them killed if they did not.

Dalayon at the trial denied making the threats, saying she only told her manager that if this happened in the Philippines the maids would have been killed, the report said.

The maids were locked in the kitchen of the employment agency but escaped. They were allowed refuge at the home of the employer of another Filipino maid and they approached the Philippine Embassy. *AFP*

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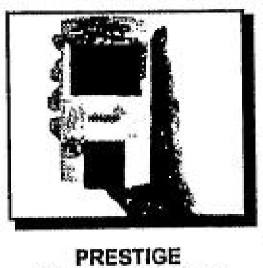

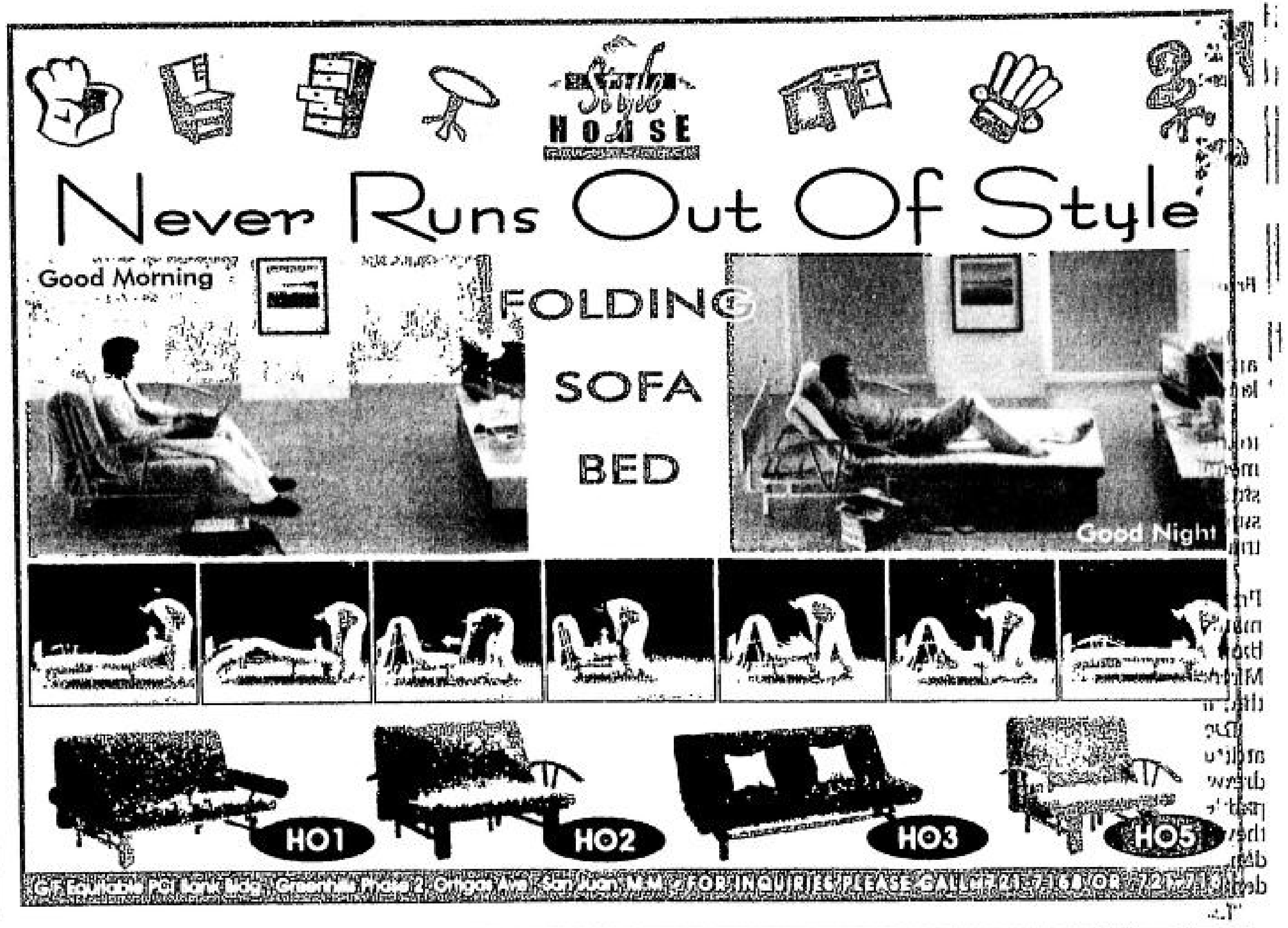
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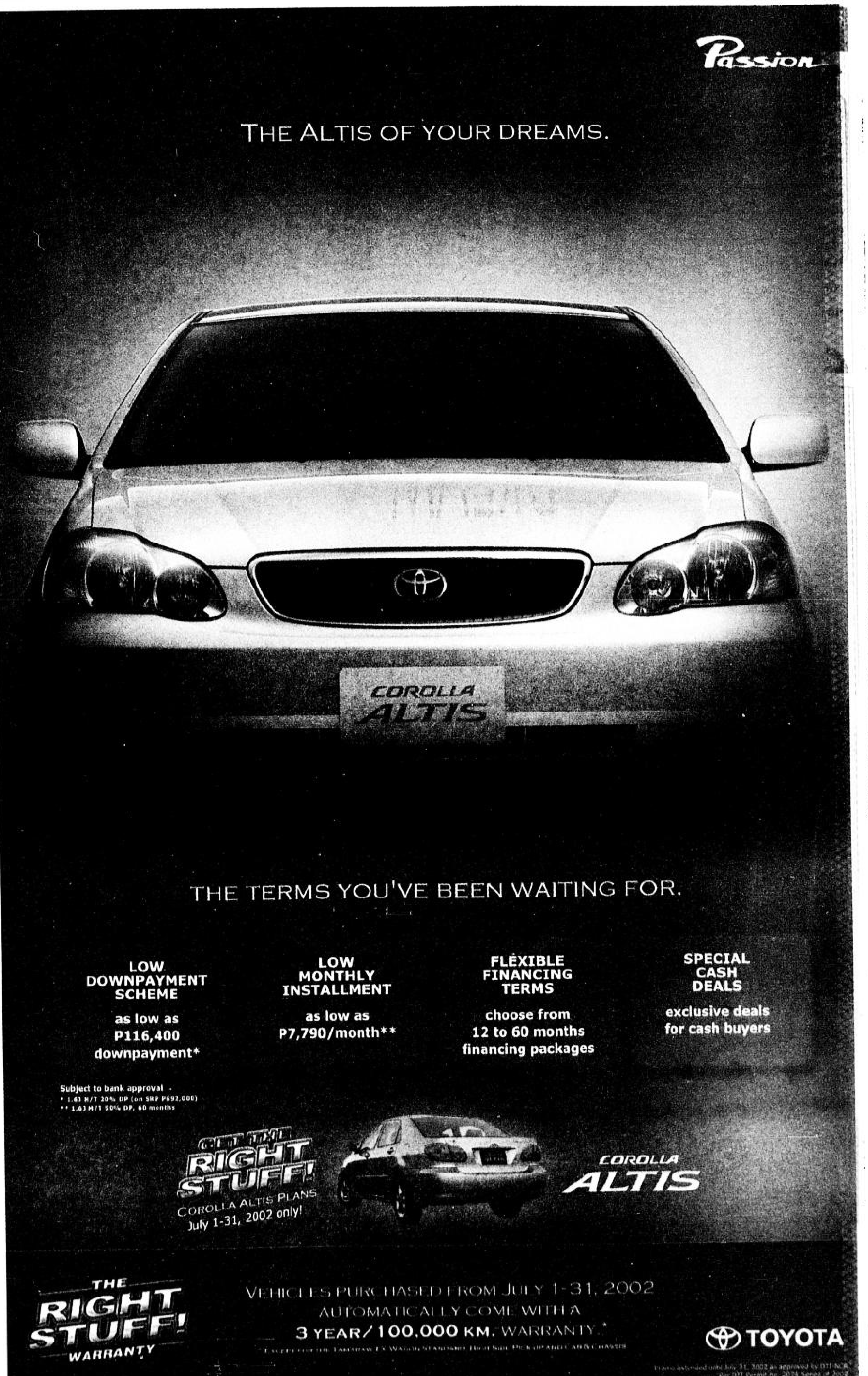
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Bishops pledge to stop abuses

CATHOLIC bishops pledged yesterday to protect the credibility of the Church by punishing priests who commit sexual abuses.

The influential Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, at the end of their annual conference over the weekend, issued an unprecedented apology for what it called "cases of grave sexual misconduct" by Filipino priests over the past two decades, including child abuse, homosexuality and romantic affairs.

Msgr. Hernando Coronel, secretary general of the 120-strong bishops' group, said yesterday that initial results of an independent study showed sexual offenses by priests were not as extensive as initially feared. But he added that the Church could not ignore the issue.

Coronel declined to provide details of the study, the results of which would be announced in three months, he said.

On Monday, Archbishop Orlando Quevedo, the CBCP president, said that some 200 Roman Catholic priests have been investigated for sexual misconduct over the past 20 years. He did not give any details.

"We apologize, we express sorrow because this is sin," Coronel told the Associated Press Television News. "There is no place for sin, especially in the Church."

Coronel said the problem persisted because many misbehaving priests were simply transferred in the past.

He said the bishops have formulated a "protocol" addressing the problem of priests who commit sexual abuses.

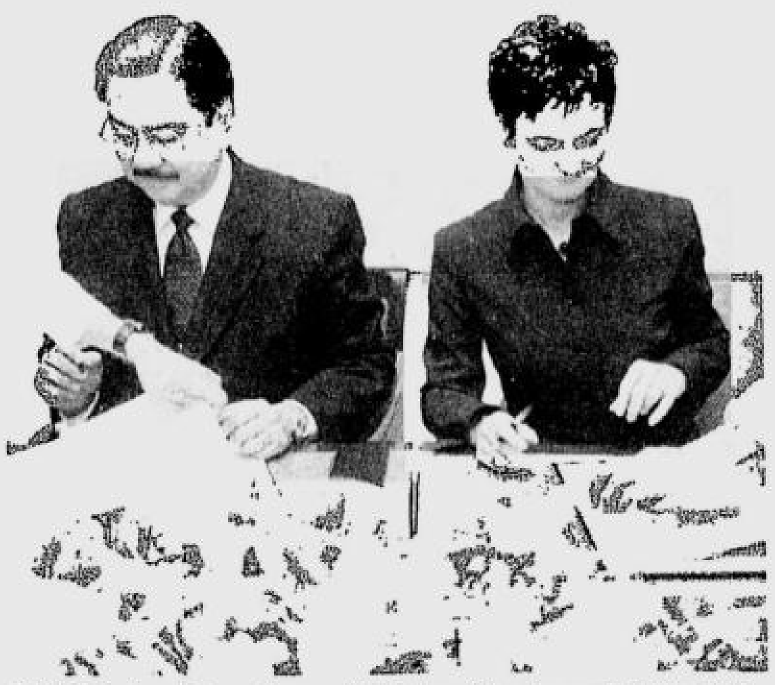
The protocol will serve as a guide on how dioceses should address the problem of sexual misconduct, and what action to take against erring priests or how to help the victims.

The guidelines, which will be ready by next year, will set stringent punishments that could include expulsion from the Church and urging victims to file criminal charges and closer monitoring, Quevedo said.

"With this protocol, we make a determination... if you cannot be a good priest, out with you," he said.

Coronel said it was important to protect the credibility of the Church, which has taken strong stands on many political issues.

"In order to have a credible, outspoken voice, we should purify," Coronel said. ***Norman Bordadora and AP***



SWISS Federal Councilor and Minister of Justice and Police Ruth Metzler-Arnold (right) headed the Swiss delegation at the signing of the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty with Justice Secretary Hernando Perez at the justice department yesterday. ERIK ARAZAS

Roco side sought on tax fraud mess

EDUCATION Secretary Raul Roco should come out and explain the grant of a multimillion-peso tax exemption to the University of Sto. Tomas Hospital, the ostensible reason for the protest resignation of his undersecretary for legal affairs, Jaime Jacob, opposition Sen. Tessie Aquino-Oreta said yesterday.

Jacob's allegations that a suspected syndicate inside the finance department was defrauding the government should not be swept under the carpet, Oreta said.

Roco should explain why he had overturned Jacob's decision denying the UST Hospital's appeal for a tax exemption on its importation of medical equipment and supplies when the documents submitted by the hospital were allegedly spurious, Oreta said.

Jacob resigned on June 3, citing "irreconcilable differences" with the secretary after Roco reversed his decision.

Reports quoted Jacob as saying that Roco may have been dealing with a syndicate at the finance department, which allegedly facilitated tax exemptions for hospitals which had been misrepresenting themselves as schools.

"There is a need for Malacañang to probe deeper into this controversy," Oreta said.

She said the investigation should go beyond the education department and include the Department of Finance.

Jacob alleged that the Mabuhay Lane, which was authorized by the DOF to grant tax exemptions, had been conniving with customs officials and school officials to defraud the government of taxes and duties in the importation of medical supplies and other equipment needed by teaching hospitals like the UST.

He said he turned down the UST Hospital's request for tax exemptions because the medical equipment in question were for the use of the hospital and not for educational purposes as required by the rules. ***Cynthia D. Balana***

RP, Swiss ink pact on mutual legal aid

By Donna S. Cueto

THE PHILIPPINES and Switzerland yesterday signed a much-awaited Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT) on criminal matters, but both parties stressed that the treaty was not exclusively focused on the recovery of the ill-gotten wealth of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

Justice Secretary Hernando Perez and Swiss Federal Councilor and Minister of Justice and Police Ruth Metzler-Arnold signed the agreement at the justice department yesterday.

A second treaty, an "Agreement on the Readmission of Persons with Unauthorized Stay," was also signed.

The MLAT with Switzerland is the first such agreement to be signed with a European nation.

Metzler-Arnold, the head of the visiting Swiss delegation, stressed however that the MLAT should not be seen as being linked to the Marcos ill-gotten wealth cases.

She said the negotiations on the MLAT were started "after the completion of the procedures of the Swiss side on the Marcos case so that the treaty is not focused on the Marcos case."

She said the Swiss delegation was here only to sign the treaty and not to discuss the Marcos or crony cases.

Metzler-Arnold said the handling of the Marcos cases now lay in the hands of Philippine authorities.

"The Swiss (will) monitor the situation and continue to cooperate as far as necessary. From the Swiss side, it (the case) is finished. So there is no link between this treaty and the Marcos case," she said.

Perez said the treaty "was not made purposely because of the alleged Marcos deposits."

He said the treaty covered a variety of crimes of interest to both countries, not purposely for coverage of the Marcos accounts.

"This will boost our fight against transnational crimes, including terrorism and money-laundering activities," said Perez.

The MLAT obligates both countries to provide mutual legal assistance "in any proceedings in respect of offenses the punishment of which falls within the jurisdiction of the judicial authorities of the requesting state."

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COMPAQ

Heat on Ople most intense from opposition

From page A1

the Department of Foreign Affairs.

Deputy Speaker Raul Gonzalez said Ople should no longer be considered because of his conditions for accepting the post.

Should Ople join the Cabinet, administration senators would again outnumber opposition solons.

"This would lead to another reorganization and completely negate the reorganization the opposition initiated last June 3," said Sen. Francis Pangilinan.

"So (Ople's) position doesn't add up," Pangilinan said.

Pangilinan even noted that, "if Ople is concerned about his commitment to a so-called new majority in the Senate, he should stay in the Senate to maintain their numbers."

In a press briefing, Ople said he would be willing to accept the DFA post if he felt that the President was "sincere and that this will not be tied up with the Senate impasse."

"When there are calls to citizens to accept certain challenges, this could not be taken lightly especially if the offer is sincere and not tied up to any political consideration," he said.

Ople noted that "this matter transcends (the current) political situation and I would rather not tie this up with the struggle in the Senate."

Ople also said Ms Macapagal's publicist Dante Ang and Bulacan Rep. Willie Villarama had made an "informal offer" when they met in Los Angeles last week.

"Mr. Ang only told me that the President was seriously considering me for the post after Vice President (Teofisto) Guingona resigned last week. But aside from that, he did not have anything else," Ople said.

He also appealed to colleagues in the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino not to "put everything on his shoulders" once he accepts the DFA post because he is only a party member and not a leader.

He said he was "just a cog with a small voice in the opposition."

"But I assure them that I will fulfill my promise that I will vote on July 22 for the new majority. It will only be after that that I would consider the Malacañang offer for the DFA post," he said.

Should he accept the DFA post, he said he would go on leave from LDP.

Ople underscored that he had yet to receive any formal offer from Ms Macapagal, although he admitted that the latter "broached" to him as early as last December the possibility of becoming DFA secretary.

"She discussed this in a private dinner in Malacañang. But I told her that since there was no vacancy (at that time), maybe we should not discuss the matter at all," Ople said.

"As early as that time, she was beginning to foresee differences with Guingona," he added.

Gonzalez said reports that the administration was counting on 14 senators come July 22 meant that the President need not appoint Ople to break the Senate impasse.

Gonzalez said the President could also consider returning Ambassador to Japan Domingo Siazon Jr. to the top DFA post.

"I am sympathetic to Letty Shahani," Gonzalez said, citing Shahani's extensive experience in the diplomatic service.

Gonzalez said political clout is another asset for a Cabinet appointee so that he or she would not be a pushover.

Gonzalez said Shahani had the political clout and "linkage to the Lakas hierarchy." Shahani is the sister of former President Fidel Ramos, chair emeritus of Lakas.

Bulacan Rep. Willie Villarama for his part hit his colleagues in the House for their "personal attacks" against Ople.

"It's a childish ploy by the young and brainless to influence Malacañang," said Villarama.

He was angered by House Majority Leader Neptali Gonzales II's description of Ople as "a prostitute."

Gonzales made the comment in objecting to Ople's conditions for taking the post.

"Let us keep an open mind and not resort to mudslinging. Calling a well-respected senator a prostitute betrays extreme paranoia and misplaced arrogance on the part of some of my colleagues in the lower house," he said.

Denied . . .

From page A1

Despite repeated appeals for reimbursement, Health Plus gave "all sorts of reasons for unnecessary delay of payment," according to the Bureau of Health Facilities and Services, the Department of Health agency which issues operational licenses to HMOs.

Jilden's misfortune did not surprise bureau director Nicolas Lutero III. In the HMO industry, Lutero said, "there is never a shortage of horror stories." Health Plus is one of six HMOs that went under in the last four years.

"Many patients are forced to settle the hospital bills and then claim for reimbursements from their HMOs which should not have been the case," Lutero said. "But it happens all the time. Another common complaint is non-coverage by HMOs of certain ailments where HMOs also deny payment."

Novaliches patient

Edgardo Clemente, a doctor and anti-HMO advocate, describes an incident that illustrates this second type of common complaint.

A patient at the Novaliches General Hospital complained of irregular heartbeat and fluid retention in both feet. Because the Quezon City hospital did not accredit HMOs, the woman was transferred to the University of Sto. Tomas Hospital in Manila.

After several tests and ultrasound examinations, an ovarian cyst was detected. The patient's attending physician recommended an immediate operation "or else the cyst would burst and poison her internal organs," Clemente wrote in "Mismanaged Care: The Philippine HMO Story."

The patient refused to be operated on because of financial constraints. But assured by her doctor that her HMO would cover some, if not all, the hospital expenses, she agreed to have the operation done, sometime in February 2000.

But during recuperation, she got a rude awakening. The HMO told her it was not paying for her hospital confinement, saying she had signed a waiver to that effect. The patient insisted she had not.

Her hospital bill amounted to nearly P80,000. The HMO later offered to cover P18,000 in Medicare expenses, saying it was doing so "out of pity and fairness."

That part of the bargain, Clemente wrote, was "some sort of appeasement where the patient cannot claim the HMO was 100-percent callous since it did its part in relieving the patient's financial woes."

But in this particular case, Clemente said the HMO "acted as judge, jury and executioner since it came up with a very self-serving decision. HMOs usually cite a standard management decision to the effect that the medical condition of the patient is not covered using their existing rules, then suggest paying some part of the bill as a peace offering."

The woman's ordeal was a "fairly typical horror story" involving an HMO, he said. The problem stemmed from "poor coordination, simple bad manners and, most of all, an attempt (by the HMO) to run away from payment duties."

Industry gadfly

Clemente has been campaigning against HMOs for more than four years now. He is the spokesperson on HMO matters for both the Philippine Medical Association and the Philippine Hospital Association.

Jesus Verne Quiazon, president of the Association of Health Maintenance Organizations in the Philippines Inc. (Ahmopi), described the physician as the "gadfly of the industry."

"He talks harshly against us," Quiazon said. "He says we are an association but we don't police our ranks. Not even a slap on the wrist. But we're going in that direction."

He said Clemente was "speaking from the point of view of health care providers. They (the Clementes) own Capitol Medical Center and he himself is a surgeon. Capitol has a few millions collectible (from an HMO) so I can understand where he's coming from. He really has a valid axe to grind."

But Quiazon, also PhilamCare president and chief executive officer, said he and Clemente "could be comrades because we have more or less the same game plan, which is to push health issues higher in the national agenda."

Critics say HMOs are nothing but health insurance in another guise, but Quiazon disagreed: "In health insurance you're waiting for a disease to happen, then you pay. In HMOs, we keep you healthy so you don't spend so much for your health. In health insurance you have to pay out first before you get your money back and you're never refunded 100 percent. Normally, it's 80 percent of what is covered.

"And third, health insurance is very reactive. You get sick, they pay you. In HMOs our thrust is maintaining health. It's disease prevention. Among the integral parts of the plans that we sell are the annual physical examination and continuity of care especially for chronic conditions.

"And when you're hospitalized there's no cash out. Just show your card and the HMO will take care of it. For all the ordinary illnesses, usually you don't pay anything extra anymore.

"Many HMOs have no maximum limit for ordinary illnesses. The limits kick in only when you are in catastrophic ailments like cancer, open heart surgery, Intensive Care Unit cases."

On complaints of denied coverage, Quiazon said "it boils down to knowing the plan that you bought. When you buy a car people would normally go out of their way to check things out. In our case, people don't. In companies, we always have a problem because during orientations nobody shows up. But when they get sick, that's when they ask questions. Individual subscribers, on the other hand, are usually driven by agents. And sometimes our agents tend to overpromise in their desire to get an account."

Pre-existing ailments

"If the ailment was existing before you came in, we will not cover that. But anything that happens after you become a member we will cover that. So that if you come into the program and you're already suffering from TB or cancer, then they won't be covered. But if after a year, you develop TB or cancer, we will cover that. Fair, right? But sometimes, HMO agents would say, "everything's covered." And when they find out they have diabetes which is pre-existing, then it's not covered. Diabetes does not take a few days to develop. It's years."

The truth is, HMOs shun diabetics like a plague, Clemente said.

Like Clemente, Dr. Homobono Calleja, four-term president of the Philippine Medical Association, isn't buying the Ahmopi line. "What benefits do patients get? It's cheap urinalysis, X-ray, etc. And if you need more medical studies they don't give them because they're expensive. Because these will cut down their profits."

Calleja stressed "the overall quality of health care of patients under the HMO system is way below standards." He also warned that "the aspect of being shortchanged in terms of health care does more harm than good."

But critics are missing the bigger picture, HMO's "positive role in society," Quiazon said. "They enhance social growth through the concept of risk pooling or cross-subsidy between the healthy and the sick, the rich and the poor. They give ordinary people access to health services which normally are available only to the rich."

Quiazon also said facilities at PhilamCare and majority of Ahmopi-affiliated clinics and laboratories meet government standards.

With 86 clinics, Pryce Care topped the list of HMOs operating such facilities, followed by Aetna with 85, Maxicare PCIB Cigna (66), Value Care (58), Star Health (53), CAP Health Maintenance Organization (40), Health Maintenance (27), Pamana (18), PhilamCare (16), and St. Patrick's Health Care (10).

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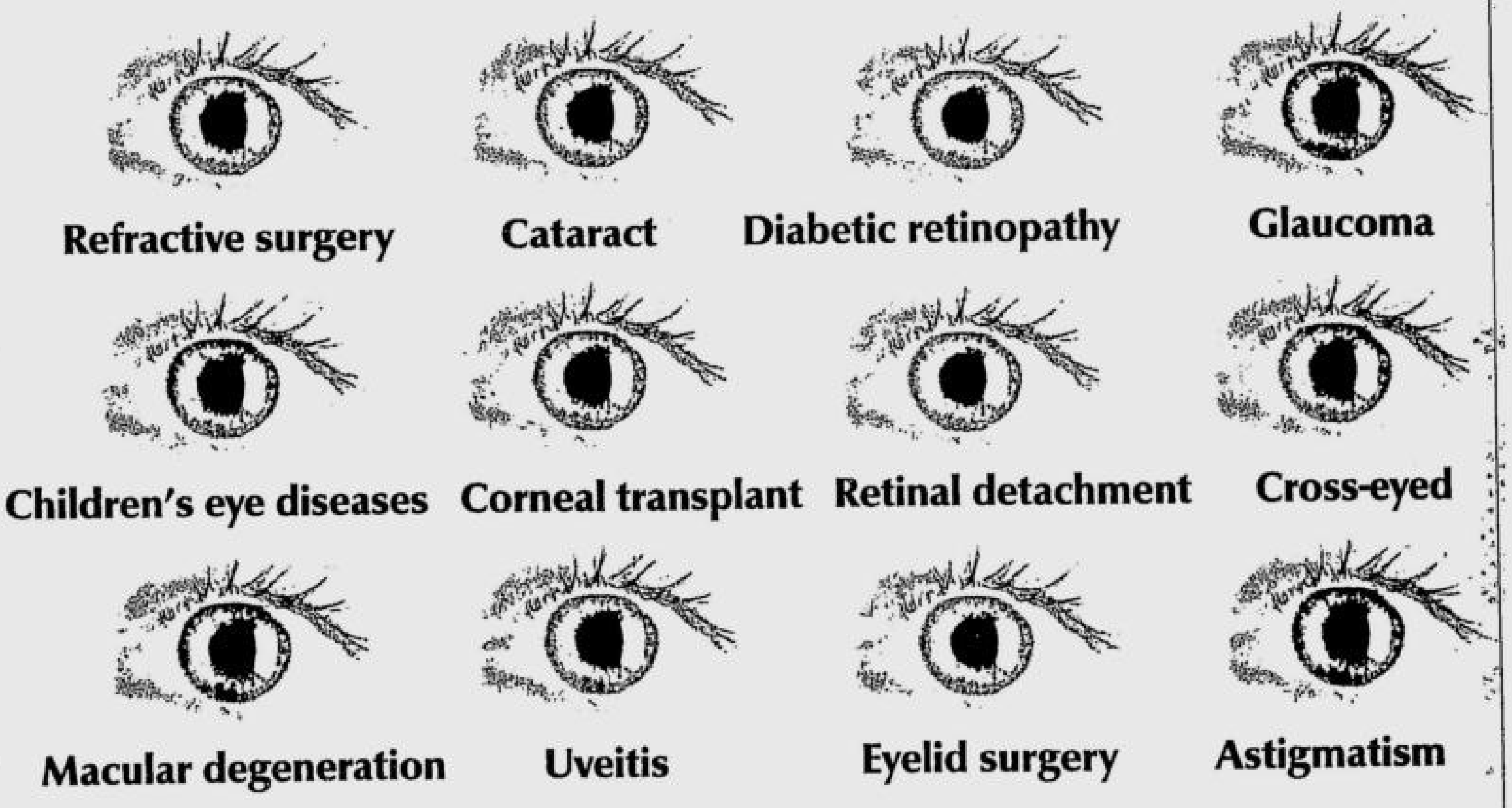

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Founding Chairman

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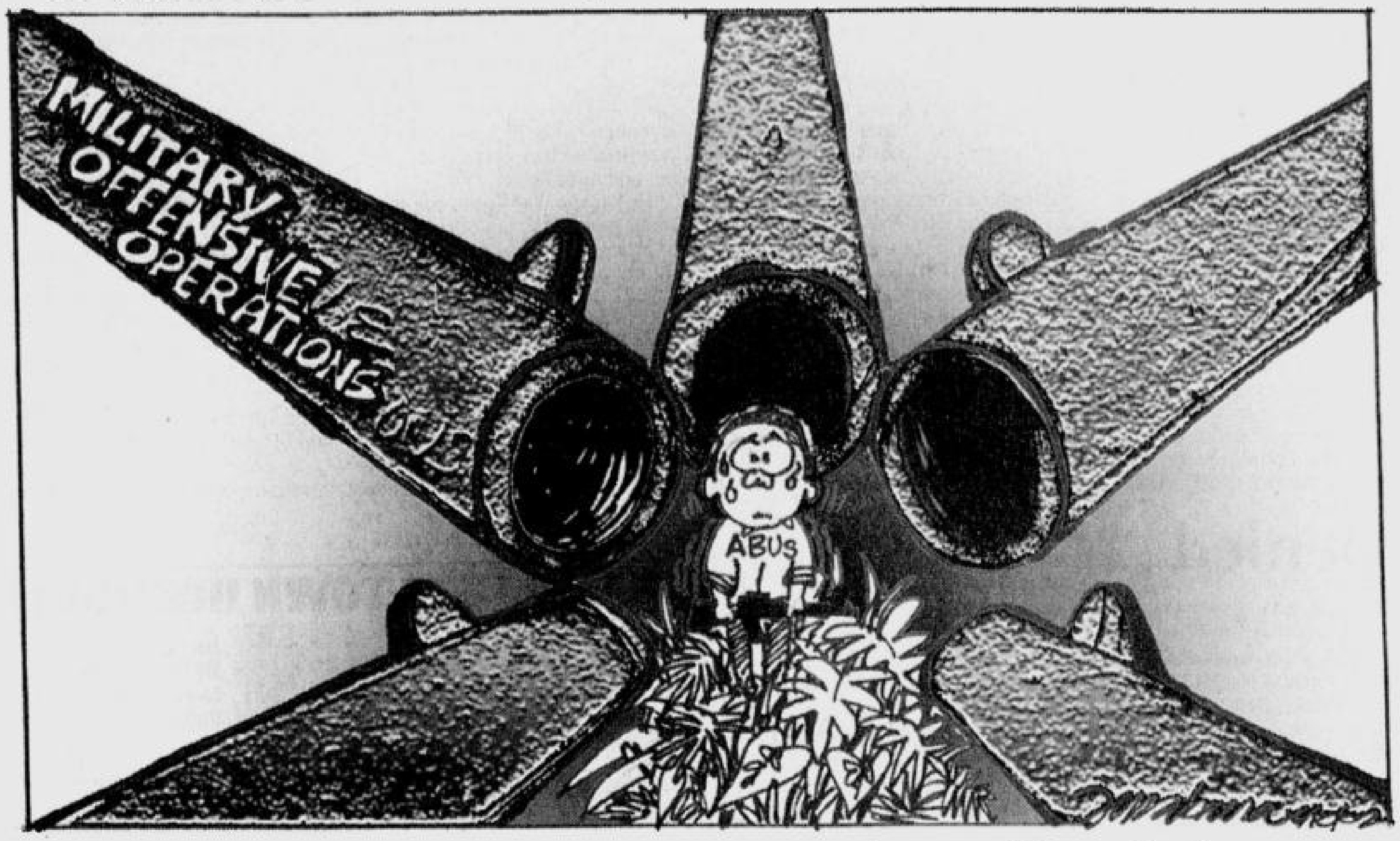


EDITORIALS

Misplaced loyalty

CONFRONTED with his first challenge as chief of the Philippine National Police, Director General Hermogenes Ebdane didn't blink. Told that 30 provincial police directors were threatening to resign, Ebdane suggested that they write a formal letter of resignation. Then, he added, he would "consider" their offer "for the good of the police organization."

Well put. Indeed, Ebdane could not have done differently without looking like a wimp.

The police officers had threatened to resign *en masse* in protest against the order of the National Police Commission relieving five regional police chiefs and two other senior officials of their posts for failing to stop *jueteng* in their respective jurisdictions. These seven officials "have continuously and seriously supported the campaign against all forms of illegal gambling," the younger officials said in a manifesto.

The kindest way to look at this statement is that they don't know what they are talking about. But the more likely explanation is that they are covering up for their superiors and ultimately themselves.

No doubt, one or two among those who were stripped of their posts have outstanding records both in terms of performance and personal integrity. But the same thing cannot be said of everyone among the seven. Some, in fact, are believed to have accepted protection money from *jueteng* lords.

This is why it is regrettable that to clear the names of some really good officers, the Napolcom also had to clear those whose criminal activities triggered the revamp in the first place. The clarification issued by the Napolcom said it found no evidence that the seven officials were on the take from gambling. With that, the renewed drive against illegal gambling seems to have gone pffft. No campaign against illegal gambling or any other organized crime will ever succeed without first cleaning up the police force of its protectors—and those who play blind to the shady deals and other criminal activities going on under their very noses, such as those 30 provincial directors.

Granted the seven officials were sacked for no other reason than command responsibility, what right do these provincial directors have to question the decision of the Napolcom? The very first rule drilled into the head of anyone who joins the police force (or the military) is: "Obey first, ask questions later." But it seems that to these police officers, even more basic than this is the rule of the Mob: the code of omerta. At the very least, this shows a misplaced sense of loyalty or at worst, insubordination.

Thus, Acting Press Secretary Silvestre Afable sounded pathetic when he pleaded with the rebellious officers to uphold "the legitimate instruments of authority." What is obviously needed in the police force is strict enforcement of discipline and unequivocal demonstration of authority.

Ebdane has started to assert his authority. He should follow it up with firm action. He should fire those 30 provincial directors.

Ople's delusion

SEN. Blas F. Ople does not only believe he is the best man for the job of foreign secretary. He is totally convinced he is the only man for the job. Just listen to what the man has been saying recently.

Ople said he would consider accepting the job if it would be formally offered to him. In fact, he said he would consider it a "sovereign command." Which is putting it like a loyal citizen of the republic, if not a faithful subject of a reigning queen.

But he couldn't keep his opportunism from showing. His acceptance of the foreign affairs portfolio, he warned, should not be tied up to the reorganization of the Senate, which is deadlocked. He will only serve in the Cabinet after he shall have voted with the opposition when Congress opens on July 22, he said.

Who is he kidding? If he is being wooed now, it isn't because of some sterling qualities he thinks he possesses but because his defection will keep the Senate in the hands of the administration coalition. If he can't live with that reality, the administration should tell him to forget it. Better yet, the President should hire him on the same day he says he is ready to serve and let Afable announce the next day that she has accepted his resignation. That should bring Ople back to earth.

Navotas fishpond being used as illegal dump

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

YESTERDAY, this column gave some reasons why Malabon and Navotas are constantly being flooded even with the slightest rains. One of these reasons is that fishponds, for which the two municipalities were once famous and which used to be catchment basins for rain water, were filled up to be sold as subdivision lots. That practice continues because the polluted rivers have effectively killed the fishponds. In fact, the ill-fated city hall of Malabon was supposed to be constructed on a former fishpond in Barangay Catmon. (Construction was stopped by a lawsuit against Mayor Amado Vicencio and several others.)

Right now, 2,000 tons of Malabon's garbage are being dumped in a fishpond in Navotas. You won't see any garbage truck going through the town's narrow streets because the garbage is being carried by barges from Manila's Pier 18 across Manila Bay to Navotas. But the fishpond-garbage dump has no environmental compliance certificate (ECC) as the law requires. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources knows of the existence of this guerrilla dump. It knows it has no ECC and is violating the law, but it is not doing anything to stop the illegal dumping of garbage there.

But here is the danger. The rains and floods are filling up the fishpond with water. When it overflows, the spilled water will carry the garbage into Manila Bay and pollute it and make it shallow. Not only will Metro Manila be one big garbage dump but also its once pristine Manila Bay, famous the world over for its brilliant sunsets.

In fact, some garbage contractor must already be dumping garbage into Manila Bay. If you go by ferry to Corregidor from the back of the Cultural Center, you will pass through a stretch of sea where garbage, mostly plastics, are floating. (The organic wastes must have sunk to the bottom.) How did the garbage get there? The DENR must investigate and stop the pollution of Manila Bay. The Department of Tourism must also clean that part of the bay. Tourists going to Corregidor see it and are horrified.

* * *

The plan of MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando to ship Metro Manila's garbage by freight train to Bicol or somewhere on the way is due for a rude shock. There are reports that the Catholic Church has instructed its dioceses to oppose the dumping of garbage from elsewhere into their jurisdictions. And come to think of it, it is really unfair to dump one's trash into a neighbor's backyard. Who would welcome living next door to a garbage dump? The golden rule should apply to garbage as to everything else.

And what's wrong with the sanitary landfill in Montalban now that people there seem to have resigned themselves to it? The government spent a lot of money constructing it; it has an MRF (materials recovery facility); it has an ECC; and the road leading to it has been improved. But why are Metro Manila's cities and municipalities not dumping their trash in it and instead using many illegal, clandestine guerrilla dumps in and around the metropolis?

Because the Montalban landfill weighs each truckload of garbage and therefore has an accurate record of the trash that garbage contractors dump there. The contractors and the mayors don't want that. They can't have ghost deliveries and report heavier loads of garbage than they actually carry. They can't collect more than what they actually earned. So how can they afford the kickbacks they have to give to the mayors and their lieutenants?

The contractors don't want the dump operator to be honest. But the Montalban mayor does not want to inflate the tonnage of garbage dumped in his landfill just to please the contractors and mayors because when the time of reckoning comes, his constituents will look for the money paid for all that ghost tonnage.

The MMDA can tell the mayors to dump their garbage there instead of polluting areas around the metropolis. It has recycling and composting facilities using a revolutionary enzyme invented by a Filipino that hastens decomposition. It plans to give the compost, free, to urban gardeners and to farmers in outlying areas. That should reduce the volume of non-biodegradable garbage to be actually dumped in the landfill. And that should give the MMDA plenty of time to prepare the next landfill.

The problem is to find where that new landfill would be. No community would want one in its midst. It should be in a place where no one would complain. That can be nowhere else but where nobody resides: the sea, as has been done in Japan, the United States and elsewhere. There, garbage has been used to reclaim valuable land from the sea.

But wait, it is not a simple matter of just dumping the trash into the sea. The site must be enclosed and the bottom lined with plastic liners to prevent polluting the waters. Then sand and soil is dumped in until the level is above water. Garbage can then be dumped on it and covered with more soil.

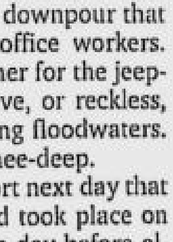
Or through a process called "hydromex," the garbage can be compressed into concrete-like blocks and used for construction or reclamation.

Fernando says that both systems are expensive. Yes, but they are environmentally sound. And you get more than double your money back from the hectares and hectares of land that would be reclaimed. It's much cheaper than reclaiming land the conventional way. And throwing away good money endlessly for dumps on land. And you will hit two birds with one stone: you dispose of garbage and gain new land in the process.

Flood of memories

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros



IT'S been a wet world everywhere. I had just been laughing at the way Wimbledon had gone, with people betting less on who would win the matches and more on whether the matches would take place or not. Or whether they would finish in one blow or unravel in installments. V.J. Amritraj expressed everyone's sentiments when he said the whole thing seemed to have become a joke. Everyone was spending more time waiting than watching or playing.

Then suddenly, the rains came down on us. I remembered that V.J. had also said those interruptions would not have happened in India, where it would have been one long hot summer. I don't know about India, but I just saw on television some days ago how Bangladesh and Sri Lanka have been much ravaged by the recent burst of rains and the floods that have tumbled in their wake. Scores have been killed, hundreds have been left homeless.

As I write this, the rains have come pouring back down again. The morning began with some light, amid the clouds. There was no sun, that would have been too much to hope for. But there was light, which seeped through to the earth and made the leaves on the trees that have been growing lush and tall beside our building shimmer with green.

I thought my joke had come true. I had told my kid the night before that all that was needed to stop the rains, which had been beating down relentlessly for three days, was for the Department of Education to suspend classes. That never failed. Each time schools declared a holiday, the sun shone. God, or fate, or the weather, likes to play tricks on this particular spot of earth.

But nothing of the kind has happened. The rain has lashed on, shifting from the leaden downpour of the days before to a drifting, whipping, kind. Maybe it will go by the end of the day, maybe it won't. But it's reminded me of something that happened almost exactly 30 years ago today. That was the horrific July-August floods of 1972. I can only pray it doesn't happen again. Though with today's climate being the messed-up thing it is, you never know.

The prediction was for a severe El Niño this year, but as the weather people themselves say, that doesn't preclude La Niña. The two have been known to go together, like fitful lovers.

What made the rains of 1972 less than exactly 30 years ago was that they began on July 17. It grew dark as night in the afternoon of that day, and before nightfall, the heavens broke loose. It was a ferocious downpour that stranded schoolchildren and office workers. Commuters fought off each other for the jeepneys and buses that were brave, or reckless, enough to plunge into the rising floodwaters. By nighttime, the flood was knee-deep.

The newspapers would report next day that the worst downpour on record took place on July 14, 1911, but the one the day before almost rivaled it in ferocity. That makes July, the month named after Julius Caesar, the cruelest month of the year, to go also by our rains today. Who knows? Maybe it's Caesar's way of avenging the flood of blood that leaped out of his body on the Ides of another month. But at least only as natural disasters go. The cruelest month as man-made disasters go remains August: Aug. 21 in particular was the date Plaza Miranda was bombed and Ninoy Aquino was murdered, a dozen years apart.

But to go back: It would soon become obvious that a new record would be set as far as the worst rains and floods went. The rains that began on July 17, 1972 would not stop after days. It would go on for a month.

It was a disaster for me personally because my livelihood then (as now!) depended on submitting articles to a publication. Sta. Mesa, where I lived, had become a no man's land. It was impassable, the floodwaters having risen to engulf jeepneys. It may now be unimaginable to those who grew up on PCs and modems, but at the time to submit an article you had to physically go to an office and plunk the thing on the lap of your editor—after typing a clean copy from several unreadable drafts on a manual typewriter. (What is that?—you can almost hear the expostulations.) I was in for weeks of belt-tightening.

But my misfortunes were nothing compared to the rest of the nation's. Ninoy Aquino wasn't just succumbing to his usual hyperboles when he said it was the worst disaster to hit the nation since the Japanese Occupation. It devastated 5.5 million people in Central Luzon, Greater Manila, the towns around Laguna de Bay and Taal, and even Baguio City and Benguet. Greater Manila alone took in 557,783 gallons of water—enough, the weather bureau said, to have supplied its needs for the next five years.

There were many explanations for the rains, some of them religious. The mayor of Manila himself, Ramon Bagatsing, advanced the theory that it was the result of the theft of the Sto. Niño, an icon bequeathed by the Galleon Trade, from Tondo Church. No less than Imelda Marcos ordered a frantic search for it. It was found a week later—solving crimes in this country has always been a matter of will—stripped of its valuable adornments but intact. In thanksgiving, the First Couple held a procession in its honor, and for a few hours at least the skies held still. And then it wept with a vengeance.

The rains stopped only toward the end of August, as su[illegible] they began. But not before leaving [illegible] country in shambles. It would take months before the country could recover from it.

As it turned out, however, it would not be the worst disaster to hit the country. That would happen one month later, setting a record that has not been broken to this day. Ferdinand Marcos would declare martial law on Sept. 21 of that year.

To this day, the country hasn't recovered from it.

The President's bloodied nose

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is suffering from the trauma of the mishandling of the resignation of Vice President Teofisto Guingona Jr. from the Cabinet and the faux pas on the seduction of Sen. Blas Ople to join her Cabinet.

She would rather forget these events as nightmares but they keep on coming back to haunt her. These two devastating events came within days of each, casting serious doubts on the maturity of her political judgments under crisis pressure.

At a dinner in the Palace two weeks ago, when she was asked about the bungled Guingona resignation, she curtly brushed aside the query, saying, "Let's forget about Guingona, for his own sake." She refocused the discussion on her efforts to reduce the costs of electricity and to curb the rising crime statistics.

These problems, she said, were her primary concerns, implying that political fiascoes are less important. At a dinner with the INQUIRER editors at the INQUIRER office last week, she tried again to emphasize these two concerns in the effort to divert attention from the embarrassment over attempts to plug in Ople as foreign secretary to the hole left by Guingona.

Law and order and the PPA (purchased power adjustment) rates, that are slugging electricity consumers, are legitimate primary concerns. They are, as well, politically damaging issues. The emphasis on the PPA, for which she has presented a formula, is clearly aimed at reversing the alarming plunge of her popularity ratings. The unabated kidnappings in Metro Manila are equally damaging.

As pointed out in the anti-crime summit the other day, the kidnappings not only reflect the capacity of the administration to fight kidnap gangs, but also frighten investment from flowing to the country. The killing of Abu Sabaya is a vindication of her foreign policy of uncritical collaboration with President George W. Bush's war on terrorism. It is an undoubted success for her policy, and the success has silenced criticism from the nationalists and the Left. After all, one can't argue against success.

The success against the Abu Sayyaf has handed the President a model and a formula which she hopes can be used against the urban-based kidnappers.

But the fiasco on Ople has blotted her success in the Abu Sayyaf campaign. It is precisely in the field of foreign affairs where she is showing vulnerability—not on the issue of military and security relations with the United States—but on the issue of deploying the Department of Foreign Affairs as an instrument for cheap political bargaining to break the impasse in the Senate.

It is childish for administration apologists to argue that the President has the right and prerogative to name anyone of her choice to her Cabinet. There's no debate over this prerogative. The debate is over how Cabinet members are recruited and what purposes do they serve.

After the tempest over the courtship of Ople, the plan to recruit Ople has been blasted to outer space. It is too hot to handle; it is a political dynamite with lethal political fall-out on both the administration and the opposition.

The President tried to deflect the backlash by saying that she has reactivated her search committee—which screened candidates for her first Cabinet. Part of the Cabinet was appointed from the committee's recommendations, but part came from her own choice. The revival of the committee was a false and irrelevant defense for the attempt to pirate Ople from the opposition. The committee has nothing to do with the negotiations over Ople.

On the question of Ople's compatibility with her policy, the President called attention to her eight-point policy framework which should be the guidelines for the new foreign secretary in directing foreign affairs. The framework has been published. To avoid being repetitive, let it suffice to say that there's absolutely nothing in the guidelines that addresses the sensitive issues of the growing presence of American military forces in the country. It is this issue that is important in determining the compatibility of the outlook of the President and the foreign secretary, and yet the President glosses over it. The eight "realities" that guide foreign policy are a catalogue of motherhood statements; in particular, there's nothing more platitudinous than the first "reality" which states "the paramount influence of China, Japan and the United States in security and the economic evolution of East Asia." The rest of the realities are similarly reeking with platitudes."

As a policy rubric to solve the Ople problem, the eight points are absolutely irrelevant and useless because the surrender of the foreign affairs portfolio to an opposition member is a domestic and parochial political issue.

Indeed, the issue over Ople in the Cabinet has already been overtaken by events—and swiftly at that. Other options to break the stalemate, including the possibility of dragooning a couple of opposition senators to the administration's—are already taking shape and rendering the ill-fated Ople scheme absolutely unnecessary. The administration will have its numbers to regain control of the Senate before Congress resumes session on July 22, without having to debase the foreign office as a bargaining pawn.

Meanwhile, the President has emerged from the melee with a bloodied nose—a mishap that cannot be covered up by directing public attention to the PPA and kidnappings. These two concerns, in themselves, have sorely tested her capacity to govern effectively.

Bridging the digital divide

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

ADD to the various ways our world has been divided—North and South, East and West, rich and poor, developed and developing, civilized and savage—the digital divide between the wired and unwired.

Though the Internet is supposed to have woven the entire globe into a seamless network of information and communication technology, the truth is that this net is shot through with holes. Theoretically, anyone with access to a computer gains entrée to a vast and endless library without walls, a cyber-mall that offers everything from free music to the world's treasury of art, computer games and shopping-by-clicking, novels and research findings, news bulletins and family websites. But in a poor country like ours, computers are still a luxury, and even the basic infrastructure to support computerization and computer use—electricity, telephones, literacy—is still somewhat shaky and of limited coverage.

Which brings us to a chicken-and-egg situation. Poverty prevents us from being fully wired. But unless we are fully wired, our chances of clambering out of this deep rut of poverty will remain poor, indeed. How to bridge this divide, then?

For businessman and venture capitalist Saturnino "Bong" Belen, chair of the Bato Balani Foundation Inc., the answer lies in providing disadvantaged students with the means to make the leap into the digital realm.

Last Thursday, I joined a group of the foundation's officers and friends to witness the turnover of the "Genyo" Learning Integration Program to the Inosloban-Marawoy National High School in Lipa City, Batangas. "Genyo" is the country's first fully integrated, interactive multimedia application originally developed in Australia but adapted for Philippine high school students by its local licensed distributor, iDiwa, the e-component of Diwa Learning Systems Inc.

* * *

"GENYO," according to information materials, "seeks to provide a realistic, coherent and sustainable technology integration into the school curriculum," providing content that is designed to enhance, not replace, the classroom experience while maximizing the use of various computer facilities and training already made available to the school, faculty and students.

"Genyo" is being marketed to high schools here but in an arrangement between the Australian developer and Bato Balani Foundation, the foundation has been allowed to donate one Genyo Learning Integration Program to a public high school for every program sold to a private high school. The turnover rites at the Inosloban-Marawoy National High School thus marked "Genyo's" debut in the public school system.

Judging from its physical facilities alone, Inosloban-Marawoy doesn't seem to be such a deprived institution, what with a brand-new high school wing with roomy, well-lit classrooms. In addition to computers provided by a DepEd program, it also received 10 units donated by the Ayala Foundation. Bato Balani, meanwhile, not only spruced up the computer room and donated air-conditioning, it also holds continuing training sessions for principals and teachers in the entire school district.

* * *

BILL Fernando of iDiwa tells with some amusement how the teachers took some time to get "comfortable" with working with computers and had to overcome quite a lot of resistance and trepidation. The students, by contrast, eagerly tackled computer work and soon began exploring the whole range of "Genyo" offerings beyond the immediate classroom demands. Thanks to cybercafés and network gaming, many of them already knew how to manipulate the mouse and surf the Web.

We dropped by the computer room to see how students were actually using "Genyo." The biology teacher had posted three questions on the board, the answers to which the students were supposed to find in the program. I saw students scrolling through various entries that provided cross-sections of non-living, plant and human cells, while others were trying to "beat" the computer by pointing and clicking answers to a pop quiz. As Bong Belen pointed out, many so-called computer training programs actually are limited to teaching students how to use a computer. "What I want to introduce," he says, "are programs that will help teachers and students use the computer to enhance the learning experience."

* * *

AMONG THE OTHER guests at the turnover rites, including representatives of other corporate foundations, was Paco Sandejas, a pioneer of cyber enterprises in the country. Sandejas, with some colleagues, is studying ways in which the private sector could help improve the competitiveness of local educational institutions, especially in the technology field.

One approach may be found in the First Asia Institute of Technology and Humanities in Tanauan City, Batangas, founded by a group of investors, including Belen. Though it puts emphasis on the pursuit of academic excellence from nursery to college, with IT playing a key role, the institute, bearing the acronym FAITH, says it aims to "produce students who are not only technologically skilled but are also well-grounded on good moral values."

Or as one administrator succinctly put it: "We don't want to produce computer-savvy students who will go on to create computer virus programs," but rather graduates who will "contribute to a humane and holistic development" of the nation.

It's well on its way. It was the purchase by FAITH of a "Genyo" program, after all, that paved the way for the donation of another program to the public high school in Lipa, bridging what would have been an ever-widening digital divide.

Crime and punishment, then and now

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

PART of my morning is spent going over the catalogue of crimes reported in the INQUIRER 's Metro pages. These events are basically the same—murder, theft, rape, etc.—only the names, dates and places change yet I read these religiously every day. If we had a larger or more organized data base as they do in Washington, D.C. the statistics can be summarized weekly, the incidence of particular crimes classified and its distribution within the city marked out. This way the newspaper, aside from mere reportage, can paint a picture of the crime situation, alert readers on places to avoid, and assist the police and barangays by focusing their attention on problem areas. Prevention is always better than a cure, but we don't seem to appreciate this at all.

Until we become victims ourselves, or until it hits someone we know, crime remains an abstraction for many. We delude ourselves into thinking that crime only hits other people. Sometimes we dismiss crime victims with a shrug and say, *malas lang niya* while crossing our fingers and wishing the same fate does not befall us. Crime news is like watching a horror movie, you are momentarily terrified by it and relieved. However, some items are more disturbing than the rest like the 18-year-old Pakistani woman gang-raped on orders of a tribal council last week. The poor woman was punished because her 11-year-old brother was seen walking a girl from another tribe unchaperoned! I would think punishment, if at all, would mean a scolding or a spanking, not the gang rape of his elder sister who was not even remotely involved. We cannot see the face of the victim behind a veil but I would presume she was pretty. One wonders if the tribal council would mete out the same punishment if she were old, ugly, or deformed. News like this made me feel lucky to be born and raised in the Philippines.

Surely, Rina Jimenez-David and Ceres Doyo can write more authoritatively on the issue of rape as a means of punishment, but the sheer senselessness of that crime led me to re-read the so-called Code of Kalantiaw still found in many history textbooks today. Kalantiaw and his code is a 20th-century hoax and yet textbooks merely state that the authenticity of the document is in question. At best, the Code of Kalantiaw can be studied as folklore, not as history.

There are 36 different offenses grouped into 18 laws supposedly drawn up by Kalantiaw, third chief of Aklan, Panay in 1433. These were first discussed by James Alexander Robertson, former director of the Philippine National Library, in his article "Social Structure and Ideas of Law Among Early Philippine Peoples," and a recently discovered pre-Hispanic criminal code of the Philippine islands published in 1918. His translation even reads like the Ten Commandments in the old Catechism:

"I. Ye shall not kill; neither shall ye steal; neither shall ye do hurt to the aged; lest ye incur the danger of death. All those who infringe this [order shall be condemned] to death by being drowned with stones in the river, or in boiling water.

"II. Ye shall obey. Let all your debts with the headmen (*principales*) be met punctually. He who does not obey [shall receive] for the first time one hundred lashes. If the debt is large, [he shall be condemned] to be beaten to death.

"III. Obey ye: let no one have women that are very young; nor more than he can support; nor be given to excessive lust. He does not comply with, obey, and observe [this order] shall be condemned to swim for three hours [for the first time] and for the second time, to be beaten to death with sharp thorns; or for the second time, [he shall be] lacerated with thorns."

While I am sure that swimming for three hours will diminish lust in anyone, I wonder how Aklanons in 1433 kept time without a clock? How come this detail did not ring alarm bells in normally cautious historians? I will not bore readers with the complete text but share here my favorites:

"VII. They shall be put to death: he who kills trees of venerable appearance; he who shoots arrows at night at old men and women; he who enters the houses of the headmen without permission; he who kills sharks, or striped crocodiles.

"VIII. Slavery for a daom [unspecified period of time] [shall be suffered]: by those who steal away the women of the chief; by him who keeps ill-tempered dogs that bite the chief...

"X. All those shall be beaten for two days, who: sing while traveling at night...

"XI. They shall be burned those who...try to steal away the women of agorangs [old men.]

"XIII. All those shall be exposed to the ants for half a day; who kill black cats during a new moon...

"XVII. Those shall be killed who profane sites where idols are kept...He who performs his necessities in those places shall be burned."

Other punishment includes: being cut to pieces and these pieces fed to crocodiles, enslavement, payment with gold or honey, etc. The offenses are as irrational as the corresponding punishment. Even my students fall off their seats laughing when I read this aloud in class. One wonders how such a text gained acceptance for so long. Maybe nationalism clouded the vision of earlier historians. In their zeal to prove that Filipinos had pre-Spanish law and civilization they took this hoax in whole—hook, line and sinker, leaving our generation to undo the damage.

* * *

Comments are welcome at ambeth@admu.edu.ph

Alarming trend in CARP land cases

COMMENTARY

Geiah Maria G. Homeres

INCONSISTENT is how farmers describe the government's implementation of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law (CARL). During the past 14 years, agricultural lands were redistributed in greater haste only when there was strong public clamor and media attention. The redistribution of the largely untouched sugar plantations in the Visayas, for instance, only commenced after the NGO/PO sector initiated a partnership with the government. Mostly, the government has been tentative in performing its mandate.

With the distribution of land and the granting of Certificates of Land Ownership Award (CLOA), one would think that half the battle had already been won. Ideally, when the CLOA has been conferred on farmer beneficiaries, it is as good as giving them the title to the land. However, a slew of recent agrarian adjudication cases indicate that the farmer beneficiaries' hold on their lands remains perilous.

The legal resolution of the cases of the farmers in Sumilao, Bukidnon and Sumalo, Bataan is illustrative of an alarming trend. The Supreme Court and the Court of Appeals declared that the agrarian reform beneficiaries are not qualified beneficiaries of the CARP as they were mere seasonal workers. They were also considered bereft of a legal personality—which rendered them unable to legally contest conversion or exemption cases concerning their land.

With their legal personality taken away, many agrarian reform beneficiaries began to lose agrarian law implementation (ALI) cases. The Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), for its part, never gave farmers the legal recognition they needed to pursue ALI cases.

Sumilao case

The farmer beneficiaries of Sumilao, Bukidnon had strong bases to stake their claim over 144 hectares of land. As qualified beneficiaries of CARL, they were granted CLOAs on Sept. 25, 1995. Moreover, the land was irrigated and was thus non-negotiable for conversion. It was also already placed under compulsory acquisition.

Yet, the former owners persisted in filing a motion for conversion, which the DAR rejected. However, when the owners elevated their case to the Office of the President, then Executive Secretary Ruben Torres allowed the conversion of the property. In response, the Sumilao farmers staged a hunger strike outside the DAR national office, which caught the media and the public's attention. This prompted then President Fidel V. Ramos to come up with a "win-win" resolution. On Nov. 11 1997, Deputy Executive Secretary Renato Corona drafted a resolution granting the application for conversion of 44 hectares while leaving the remaining 100 hectares intact.

But Governor Fortich brought the case to the Supreme Court where Torres' decision was upheld. The Supreme Court also barred the Sumilao farmers from intervening ostensibly because they were mere "recommendee farmer beneficiaries." They also declared that the "win-win" resolution was beyond the authority of Corona.

The farmers appealed for a full-court deliberation of the case but the Supreme Court declared that the farmers, as seasonal workers, had no legal interest over the land and were only limited to a just share its profits. It also issued a resolution dismissing the DAR's motion for reconsideration on the Court's refusal to decide on the case en banc.

Sumalo case

On the other hand, the Sumalo farmers were occupants or actual tillers of the land in question. Although the land was not irrigated and therefore negotiable for conversion, it was already offered under the Voluntary Offer to Sell (VOS) scheme by the former landowner.

On its own, the farmer beneficiaries stood a good chance of winning the Sumalo case because they were able to file a motion on time, independent of the DAR. That alone should have been sufficient evidence of the farmer beneficiaries' legal interest in the case as they were qualified beneficiaries under Sec. 22 of RA 6657. Moreover, Secretary Ronaldo Zamora already overturned Torres' decision and decided in favor of the farmers. But the Court of Appeals ruled against the farmers and based its argument on the precedent set by the Sumilao case. (At present, the Sumalo case is under review at the Supreme Court.)

In both the Sumilao and Sumalo cases, the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeals virtually negated the right of seasonal workers to own lands. Yet, Sec. 22 of RA 6657 clearly listed seasonal workers and occupants as among the qualified beneficiaries! Moreover, the Sumilao case should not be treated as a precedent because its main issue was whether the "win-win" resolution crafted by Corona was valid or not. The question of the farmers' legitimacy as qualified beneficiaries was merely a side issue.

The successive decisions issued by the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeals confirm that only farmers and regular farmworkers are considered as qualified beneficiaries. As stated in the Court of Appeals decision on the Sumalo case, "the parties who may be allowed to intervene as oppositors in land use conversion proceedings are the farmers and regular farmworkers in the land." This is becoming a dangerous precedent for all other cases pending before the Court of Appeals.

A case in point is the predicament of the Macabud farmers in Rodriguez, Rizal—the farmers are locked in a court battle with the Capitol Golf and Country Club over the ownership of a 53-hectare land in Barangay Macabud. The Court of Appeals again issued a decision based on the Sumilao case, declaring that "not being actual grantees of the land but mere qualified beneficiaries, they have no legal standing to sue and are not the real party in interest."

Addressing the issue

The government should issue an administrative or executive order that recognizes the right of agrarian reform beneficiaries as parties of interest in cases that pertain to the land that has been awarded to them. Armed with the AO or EO, they can legally contest applications for conversion and exemption and file motions of manifestations in court. Otherwise, the courts will persist in churning out decisions that discriminate against farmer beneficiaries.

Moreover, the farmers should be included in all the phases of the adjudication process; from the time a case or application for conversion/exemption is filed, up to the final resolution of an agrarian case. This will empower the farmers and grant them recognition of their role as the new owners and protectors of the land awarded to them under the CARL.

Geiah Maria G. Homeres is the policy advocacy officer of the Philippine Peasant Institute.

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A welcome crisis for the Church

A YOUNG priest, whose impeccable credentials cannot be questioned, put into words what the sixtysomething claim they had in the back of their minds all along, having lived this long, and being of the Church.

"Our Church is an institution in denial, unable to accept what lies at the root of its grave problems, offering only *ad hoc* solutions instead of far-reaching reforms.

"The Church moves in centuries and millenniums. It took half a millennium for it to accept Galileo's theory about the world; and might take another half to accept the vision of Pope John XXIII and the Vatican II.

"The Church stands guard at the gates of life—at the birth and death of its members—on issues such as abortion, contraception, euthanasia and death penalty; more afraid to be witness to the true values of Christianity on issues of middle life like development, progress and a healthy population."

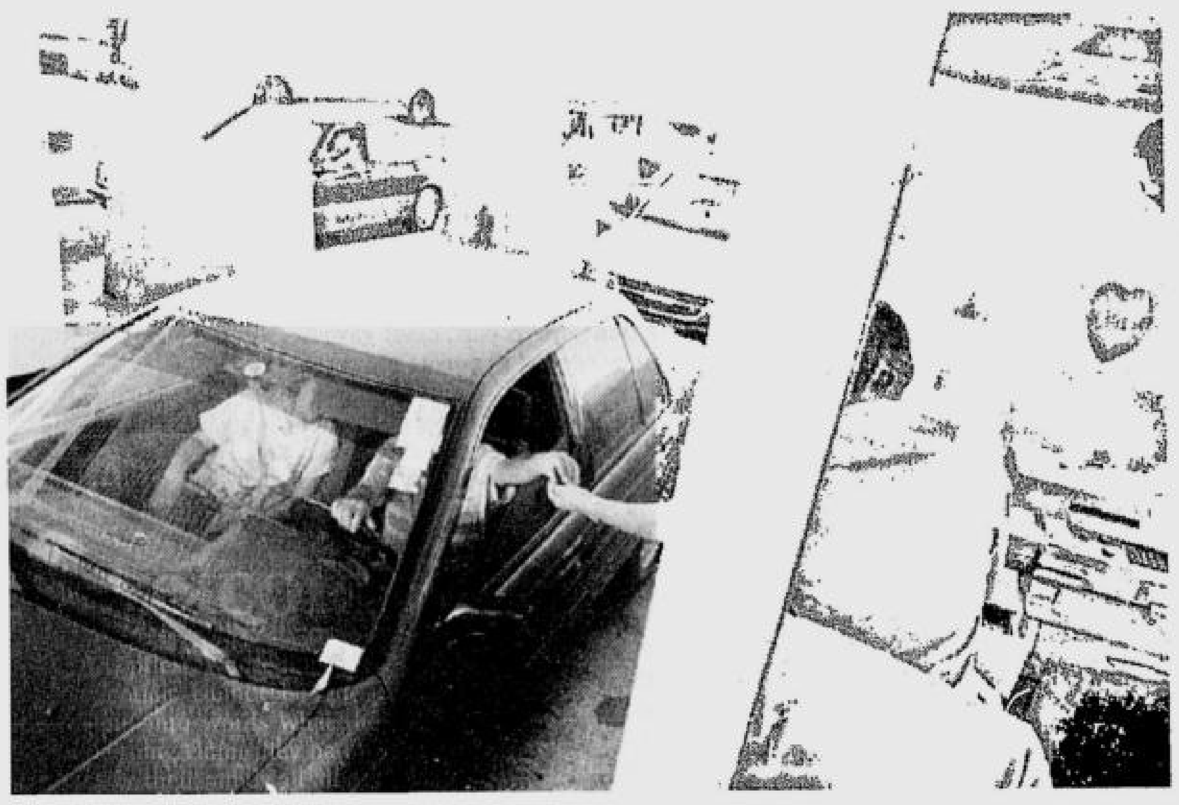
This crisis that is engulfing the institutional Church, definitely of its own making, is welcome. It is a sure sign that there are elements who are not giving up on Christ and His teachings even when there are those who are unyielding about the power and the wealth they are clutching on to.

It will be for the better if the hierarchy and the laity will be real partners in dialogue, teaching each other on equal terms. It will be for the worse if the Church remains authoritarian, centralized and reactionary; if it continues "to lack the integrity to be 'prophetic,' that is to stand for what is right in the face of what sometimes can be the depersonalizing machinery of the institution."

After the rather grizzly picture and the mind-boggling scenario, what was there to do but take a deep breath, and here, heart and grace took over. To answer the question, "Why are you still Catholic?" each one expressed an act of faith. There will be no abandoning the Church. Heartwarmingly, each one confessed her reason for holding on. "I was born into it; it is a good religion to die in." "It is faith. I must have Christmas and Easter every year!" "It is the Eucharist from where I draw my strength." "It is the religion that historically traces its beginning to Jesus Christ." "I raised my family according to its teachings; my conscience having the final say." We are taught to love our enemies and that takes a lifetime to practice."

The Church is at another turning point in its history; some sixtysomething women are standing close by.

**—VITA CHANCO-LIM, member,
Teresa Makabayan,
jfl@info.com.ph**



Are SLEX tolls untameable?

I WOULD just like to share my thoughts on the toll increase on the South Luzon Expressway (SLEX). I live in Las Piñas and use the SLEX to go to and from work, although I could take alternative routes like the Coastal Road or Sucat Road, and it seems that I may be forced to do so because the proposed toll increase is highway robbery!

I understand that Citra needs to generate income and also cover the expenses it incurred in constructing the elevated portion of the Skyway. But that should not come at the expense of the public. Roads and such infrastructure are public utilities, and as such the government needs to provide those services to the people.

The at-grade section of the SLEX was not constructed by Citra. They are in charge of maintaining it, but they are charging too much for its use. They probably think that people will just accept the increase because they have no choice. And can somebody please explain to me just what the Toll Regulatory Board (TRB) is regulating? Ever since the establishment of the TRB, it seems that the toll rates have skyrocketed. I do not want to point fingers, but maybe its easier to allow these toll increases because some people in the TRB are making it easier to do so—in exchange for something, of course.

Everytime Citra files for an increase, it is usually 40 percent or more. During the last *"tong"* or toll increase last December (if I recall correctly), the rates went up by more than 100 percent, for crying out loud! If you go from Alabang to Magallanes, that's P42, so back and forth that's P84. That's almost equal to the gasoline you need for the trip. And they will increase the toll fees just months after people were outraged by an increase late last year.

The bottom line is, roads are a public utility and cannot be treated like they were a luxury. People need to use the roads to go to work, school, or wherever they need to. Maybe this Malaysian consortium (Citra) does not care for the Filipino public, only to recover its investment and make money. I'd say that the government needs to do something about it. It cannot just stand around while millions of our countrymen who use these roads are abused by the excessive toll rates. If the government does not act, there might be a time that the toll fee would cost more than the gasoline you need to travel from Alabang to the Magallanes interchange. It is not the Filipino people's fault that Citra lost money on the construction of the Skyway because the Asian currencies depreciated. Citra cannot just pass on to the public the cost of its doing business here because the highway is a necessity and a public utility, not a luxury. Maybe the elevated Skyway is a bit more justified, but the at-grade section was built years ago, let it be remembered.

And until something is done about this, I will not use the SLEX as a form of protest. There are alternative routes after all, maybe not the most convenient, but it is better than remaining a victim of this ongoing larceny!

**—JAMES JASON VIBAR,
James.VIBAR@totalfinaelf.com**

SLEX toll hike: fair and reasonable

JUDGING from the press releases of some legislators and organized groups, there seems to be too much controversy about the toll hike at the South Luzon Expressway (SLEX) and the Skyway. I bet you the groups that are now protesting the toll hike may have been the same groups we were protesting with in the past, which pledged to support the toll increase provided the old expressway is rehabilitated and additional roads are built.

Before the Skyway was built, the expressway was in a real bad shape and in dire need not only of repair but total face-lifting. Fatal accidents were then commonplace; traffic jams were round-the-clock. It was economic sabotage then when we had to spend too much on fuel wasted traveling through the old expressway and too frequent repairs of our cars.

The Philippine National Construction Corp. (PNCC) redeemed itself when it got a business partner to build the Skyway and upgrade the ground-level expressway. The PNCC's boss, the government, could not be of help at all. It didn't, and still doesn't have the money to build, operate and maintain toll roads. The Skyway project had been tough and very costly. We believe it's only fair and reasonable that the project be compensated through the toll that they must collect from the users.

It's not a big deal for us motorists who had been through the nightmares of the old expressway.

**—GLADYS C. GARCIA,
25 St. John St.,
Perpetual Village,
Tanyag,
Parañaque City**

Afghan killing wake-up for the world

NEWS ANALYSIS

Peter Graff

LONDON—The assassination of a vice president in Afghanistan is a wake-up call for the international community to stick to pledges to help guarantee security there, defense analysts and officials said on Monday.

The killing of Haji Abdul Qadir on Saturday, after his first morning at work as vice president and minister of public works, has lent weight to arguments that an international security force should extend its mandate beyond the capital, Kabul.

It came after a recent US bombing accident raised questions about the long-term future of international military operations in Afghanistan. Afghans say dozens of innocent revellers at a wedding were killed in the US strike.

"I think in a way the assassination is in a sense a reality check. There was a rosy picture being painted," said Col. Christopher Langton, head of defense analysis at London's International Institute for Strategic Studies think tank.

"What it does tell us of course is that the realities of Afghanistan that did exist before the conflict do still exist." The West has maintained two separate military operations in Afghanistan since late last year: a US-led hunt-and-destroy mission pursuing the former Taliban rulers and their allies, and ISAF, an international security force for Kabul.

Commanders of the ISAF—led by Britain until last month and now by Turkey, with little US presence—say their mission has been a major success, helping the interim authorities peacefully to stage last month's loya jirga, or grand council, which set up the current government.

"Things did change and for the better," said Neal Peckham, spokesperson for Britain's Major Gen. John McColl, who ran the ISAF until last month. "The town came to life." By the time Britain handed over to Turkey, reported killings in Kabul had fallen to levels "on par with Moscow or Pretoria.

They were higher than London, but they were only 50 percent of Washington, D.C.", Peckham said.

"If the international will was there to provide a force to cover the (rest of the) country, then we could have presumably achieved similar calming effects to what we achieved in the city." The Afghan leadership has been effusive in praising the ISAF.

Last week President Hamid Karzai said McColl "could have been president of this country for all the good work you have done." The assassination of Abdul Qadir has raised new talk in Washington of expanding the ISAF's mandate, and giving a broader role to the United States, which now contributes only a few hundred military instructors to the 5,000-strong force.

"You know, we went to war to clean this country out and I don't see why we should take half measures to try and stabilize it, to make sure it doesn't become a protectorate for terrorists once again," US Sen. Evan Bayh, a democrat, said on Sunday.

Republican Sen. Chuck Hagel said Washington was "going to have to take another look at" increasing the US role in the ISAF.

The future of the US-led hunt-and-destroy operations is less assured after last week's mistaken bombing of an Afghan wedding, which Afghan officials said had killed 48 guests.

US officials have announced no formal plans to scale back, but they are clearly under pressure to lower the operation's profile to avoid provoking a backlash against Karzai's pro-US administration in Kabul.

Britain, which is cutting its contribution to the ISAF as part of its handover to Turkey, also began withdrawing its contingent of 1,380 troops doing hunt-and-destroy work last month, saying it would redeploy them if necessary.

But Langton said it would be a mistake to cut back the US-led operations in other parts of the country as long as the ISAF remained confined only to the capital.

"The international community needs to be ready to continue to provide this level of support and perhaps more," he said.

"And that's why...an announcement in Washington that military operations have been scaled down and are in effect over (would) come at the wrong time."

Reuters

DENR achievements real, not magic trick

THIS is in response to a letter by Josefina T. Cruz last July 5, claiming that Environment Secretary Heherson T. Alvarez was deceiving the people and President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, and that the chief executive was angry for the Department of Environment and Natrual Resources' failure to achierve its targets on land distribution.

Cruz was questioning the distribution by the DENR of certificates of allocation covering 150,002.34 hectares of public alienable and disposable lands to 116,000 beneficiaries, saying this was impossible and Alvarez was allegedly resorting to magic to get the Commission on Appointments' confirmation.

We want to clarify that the distribution of public lands is part of the commitment of President Macapagal to distribute 100,000 hectares of public lands in her State of the Nation Address last year.

The DENR regional offices and personnel nationwide worked overtime just to accomplish these targets, even using their personal money and resources to expedite the delivery of these services to our people.

In his latest visit with the President in Lagawe, Ifugao, Alvarez formally declared the accomplishment in a regional development council meeting. In turn, the President lauded the DENR for the immediate response to her pro-poor programs.

Cruz claims to be a lawyer familiar with land issues yet she failed to understand that each certificate of allocation we issued is accompanied by completed staff work (CSW) from the Community Environment and Natural Resources Officer (Cenro) to the Regional executive director (RED) level, with a final recommendation for the issuance of a certificate of title.

Thus, upon the DENR's issuance of a certificate of allotment, the patent application has already gone through the so-called "tedious process of verification" contrary to Cruz's allegation.

Furthermore, the certificate of allotment is already accompanied by a judicial form or the land title itself, for the eventual turnover to the concerned register of deeds, which will then formally turn over the registered title to the applicant.

As we recall, the issuance of a certificate of allocation has long been accepted as a practice dating back to 1971 when Vicente A. Valdellon, one of the most prominent directors of the then Bureau of Lands, used it. Later, the Lands Memorandum Order No. 320 dated Feb. 12, 1971 became the basis of the certificate, which "entitles the allocatee to enter and possess the property, develop the same and exercise dominion thereon."

And in a recent meeting in Malacañang, Undersecretary Ricardo L. Saludo of the Presidential Management Staff (PMS) affirmed that the Sona accomplishment of the DENR shall be based on the number of certificates of allocation issued by our regional offices.

Lastly, we are saddened that after all these taxing endeavors by the DENR field offices nationwide, their efforts would just be denigrated and downplayed by some quarters who are trying to malign a remarkable feat.

**—EDNA H. TABADORA, head,
DENR-CARP National Secretariat,
Visayas Avenue, Diliman,
Quezon City**

'Jueteng' like 'lechon manok'

I CAN'T really comprehend why, in fighting the *jueteng* menace, the culprits are not being touched by any crime fighter. I am very close to one of the financiers, who happens to be a good mayor in a southern town. The only time this mayor tells me to leave him is when his visitor is coming to see him for collection or payment. One day, I purposely waited to see this frequent visitor of his and when I saw him entering my friend's house, I got the shock of my life to see the son-in-law of a past president. No wonder *jueteng* could not be eradicated. But today, this president is not in power anymore. Why is it that this son-in-law of his is not heard of? The answer is known by the military, the police and us, who know this mayor since childhood.

What Ramon Tulfo said about *jueteng* being legalized is the proper thing to do. Remember the time when the *lechon manok* sprouted everywhere in the metropolis as a fad? Operators competed by thinning out the profit of each chicken sold until such time that the business became unprofitable. Then bottled water continued the Filipino penchant for fads, followed by the fruit shake kiosks, which originated from Taiwan. Today, only a handful of *lechon manok* operators thrive in the business. Fruit shake stores are scattered all over but you seldom see them with customers. If *jueteng* is legalized, the underworld financiers, managers and administrators will work in daylight while the more decent entrepreneurs will compete freely without the blessings of any police authority. Players will try to look for other *jueteng* joints that might give a better chance for them to win with their measly bet. At the end of the day, *jueteng* is, after all, just a fad.

The key to get your money's worth is competition. The police is under civilian officers. The military is considered an ally of the police. If *jueteng* becomes legal, the police and military will not be needed anymore. Is it right to say that *jueteng* will not be eradicated because police officers are moonlighting under civilian businessmen? Or rather, are our government leaders afraid of the military because if it could install you, it can oust you?

**—R.S. LIM, Naga Road,
Pulang Lupa,
Las Piñas City**

Should not SRMP be scrapped?

WHILE there is a temporary respite from the purchased power adjustment (PPA) primarily due to the mounting public opposition, it is important to connect the current controversy to what some people would like to believe is the "dead" issue of the San Roque Multi-Purpose Dam (SRMP).

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo gave the verbal go-ahead for this project last year despite the sustained protests of the communities which were displaced by the construction of the $1.2-billion development project. This dam is being built with loans from the Japan Bank for International Cooperation, World Bank and Asian Development Bank.

As of last week, the SRMP was declared almost 100 percent complete. All that is expected to happen now is the impoundment of water that will result in flooding and submerging of eight communities including the barangays of San Felipe, Ampucao and Dalupirip.

Sitio Bolangit of San Felipe, which used to be home to 84 households, now has only 16. The phenomenon of self-imposed evacuation and resettlement has been the trend in the other sitios, including those of Malatara, Tabu and Balucoc. Homes, flourishing fruit trees and even crops are now abandoned due to fears of the expected flooding. The official number of displaced households is pegged at 741. Sixty-one of these households belong to the indigenous people in Benguet; the rest are small subsistence and tenant farmers. We need to reiterate once more how these communities have not yet received the compensation that was due them.

As stipulated in the PPA of the National Power Corp. (Napocor), the Philippine government through the Napocor subsidized 36 percent of the construction of the San Roque Dam. The Napocor will also shoulder the cost of the project's social and environmental requirements such as the compensation and resettlement of affected communities. At the same time, the government guaranteed the $700-million loan of the San Roque Power Corp. (SRPC), which is owned by a consortium of American and Japanese firms, with different international banks. This means that if the SRPC fails to pay its loan, we Filipinos will shoulder its obligation.

Worst, all electric consumers will be forced to pay a minimum of $9 million or P450 million a month to the SRPC whether or not it produces electricity. Even in its most efficient operation, the SRPC will charge the consumers an exorbitant fee of P15 per kilowatt-hour (kWh) consumed. This is way above the current local electric charge in Northern Luzon of P5-6/kWh. This ensures the super profits of the SRPC, to the detriment of the Filipino people and the government.

Why the Macapagal administration insists on honoring the PPA and pursuing the operations of the San Roque Dam despite its huge economic, social and environmental costs to everyone stretches the boundaries of credibility and logical reasoning. This shows that the recent 10-Point Agenda of Presient Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is not meant to reduce the burden of ordinary consumers but to assure that foreign transnational corporations, monopoly power distributors and IPPs such as Meralco and the SRPC will get their maximum profit from the sweat and blood of our people.

**—FRANCES QUIMPO, national coordinator, Kalikasan (People's Network for the Environment),
175-B Kamias Ext., Sikatuna
Village, Quezon City**

ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

WANTED WOMAN

Defense reporter Bernadette Tamayo points to her picture on a poster of wanted Abu Sayyaf leaders. She has repeatedly asked the military to remove her likeness, claiming it had been obtained from television footage when she interviewed the group's leaders. *(See story on A2.)*

2 barangay bets slain

TWO candidates for barangay posts were killed by unidentified gunmen in separate incidents on Sunday and Monday in Calamba City, but police could not say if the shootings were related to the July 15 local elections.

One of the victims, Gerardo L. Maranan, 39, a candidate for barangay captain in Barangay Suplang, Tanauan, Batangas, was shot several times by three unidentified assassins at Barangay Bonggo in Calamba at about 8:30 p.m., Sunday, according to case investigator SPO3 Reno Mendoza.

The other victim, Ricardo P. Suelto, 68, a reelectionist councilor of Barangay Lecheria in the city, was killed by a lone gunman in his residence at about 5:30 a.m., Monday, Mendoza said.

Mendoza said it was too early to tell if the violence was election-related because the police had not yet identified the assassins.

The Commission on Elections said yesterday it would not postpone the July 15 barangay and youth polls even in the face of the bad weather that threatened to persist until the end of the week.

Comelec chair Benjamin Abalos Jr. said the Comelec has already commissioned two courier companies to deliver election forms to outlaying regions should it not be possible to bring them by ship or plane as is normally done.

The forms are to be delivered to the regions only three days before the polls and distributed on the eve of the elections to reduce the risk of tampering.

Candidates for barangay posts in Metro Manila were diligently campaigning despite the downpour, but few candidates for the Sangguniang Kabataan were seen doing the rounds.

Also yesterday, President Macapagal-Arroyo called on the people to "all work for honest, orderly and peaceful elections."

"Let's show the world our faith in freedom and democracy," Ms Macapagal said in a television address.

She said that military and police officers were working with the Comelec to ensure orderly polls.

The President reminded the people that they were going to choose leaders who would "take care of our communities, guard and protect us against criminals, and look after the daily needs of our communities."

Malacañang is expected to declare July 15 a holiday to encourage the country's 36 million registered voters to exercise their right.

Eight officials are to be elected for each of the barangay and youth councils. The candidate with the highest number of votes automatically assumes the chairmanship of the council. ***Romulo O. Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau, Blanche Rivera and Carlito Pablo***

Supreme Court kills PEA-Amari deal

By Donna S. Cueto

THE CONTROVERSIAL PEA-Amari deal is dead and can no longer be brought back to life.

The Supreme Court, in a unanimous decision, nullified yesterday the renegotiated joint venture agreement between the Public Estates Authority (PEA) and the Amari Coastal Bay and Development Corp., which would have transferred at least 592.15 hectares of public land to a private company at virtually no cost.

The agreement had been branded by a senator as the "grandmother of all scams."

The petition to have the PEA-Amari deal nullified was filed on April 27, 1998 by former solicitor general Francisco Chavez, who contended that government stood to lose "billions of pesos in the sale by PEA of the reclaimed lands to Amari."

The PEA-Amari deal, first negotiated in 1995 during the Ramos administration, and renegotiated during the Estrada administration, involved the reclamation of 592.15 hectares of submerged areas of Manila Bay to be shouldered by Amari.

Another 157.84 hectares from Freedom Island had been reclaimed by PEA under the deal, at a cost of P1.894 billion which was shouldered by PEA.

Under the amended joint venture agreement signed on March 30, 1999, and approved by then-President Joseph Estrada on May 28, 1999, Amari was to reimburse PEA P1.894 billion, representing the actual cost of partially reclaiming the Freedom Islands.

With the high court's decision, PEA will no longer be reimbursed by Amari.

The Supreme Court said that PEA could, however, lease the lands to private corporations but might not sell or transfer their ownership.

"PEA may only sell these lands to Philippine citizens, subject to the ownership limitations in the 1987 Constitution and existing laws," the tribunal's 76-page decision said.

It said the PEA-Amari deal, if allowed to be implemented, would set a very dangerous precedent: it would open the floodgates for private corporations and individuals to acquire public lands through PEA.

"To allow vast areas of reclaimed lands of the public domain to be transferred to PEA as private lands will sanction a gross violation of the constitutional ban on private corporations from acquiring any kind of alienable land of the public domain," the Supreme Court said.

PEA could then "transfer several hundreds of hectares of lands to a single private corporation in only one transaction."

Ombudsman can't probe me, Doy says

FORMER Vice President Salvador "Doy" Laurel filed yesterday an extended counter-affidavit with the Office of the Ombudsman following reports that Ombudsman Aniano Desierto would pursue charges against him in connection with the Centennial Expo scam.

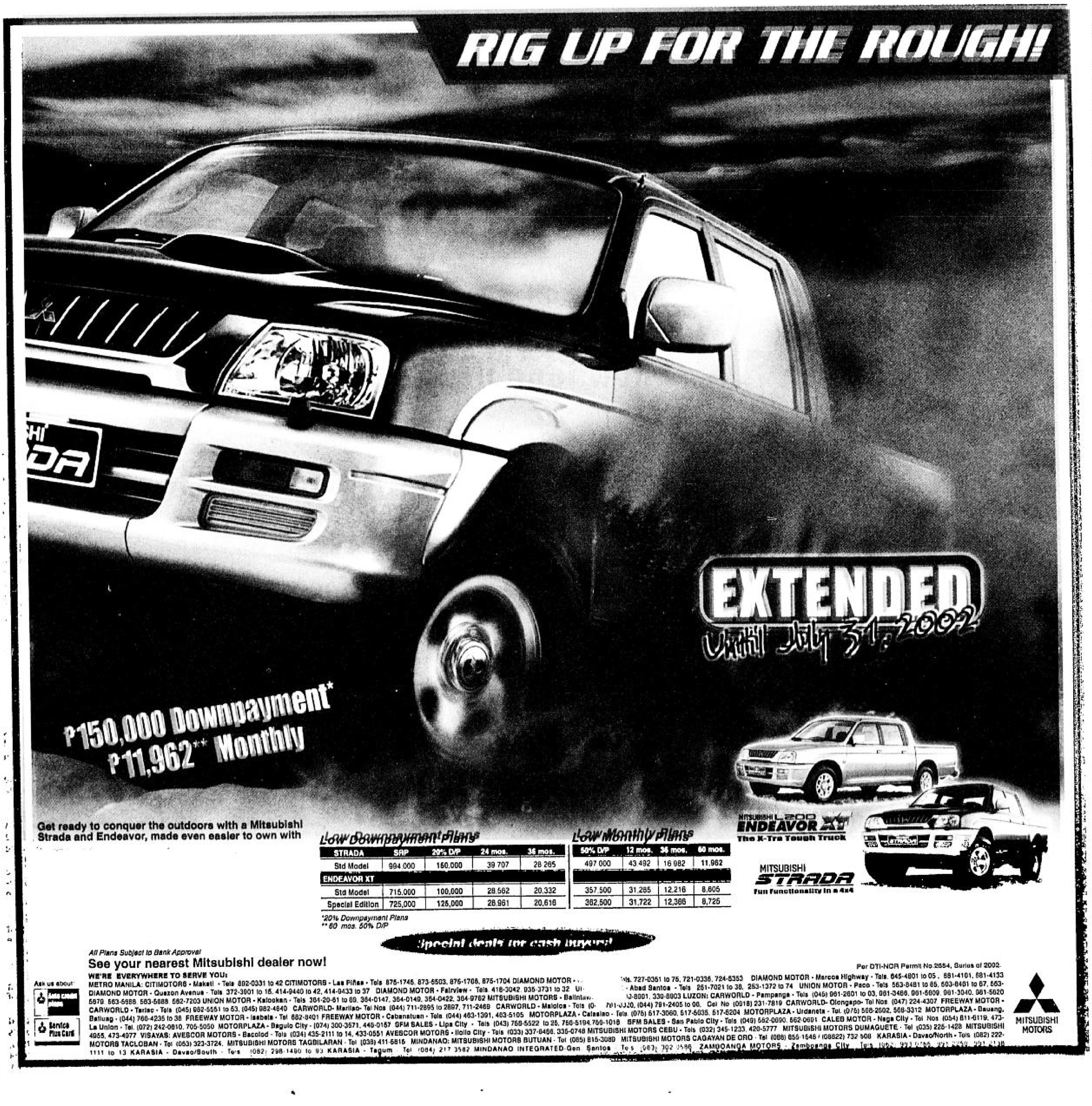
Laurel cited recent Supreme Court decisions declaring that private corporations and citizens cannot be investigated by the Ombudsman or be tried by the Sandiganbayan.

Laurel noted that three of the four original respondents in the case had been absolved by the Ombudsman, "which automatically renders untenable any charge of conspiracy."

"The charges filed against me, former President Fidel Ramos, former ExpoCorp president Teodoro Peña and Asiakonstrukt president Eduardo Angeles by the disgraced and discredited Estrada administration through its so-called Citizens' Independent Committee, were completely false and baseless," Laurel said in a statement.

He said his case was the only one still left unresolved because he was the only one who questioned the Ombudsman's jurisdiction before the Supreme Court, which then issued a temporary restraining order on the probe.

"The only reason the Ombudsman could not act on my case was because I questioned the Ombudsman's jurisdiction over private corporations," he said. ***Norman Bordadora***



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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Bush vows to use all tools vs Saddam

WASHINGTON—US President George W. Bush on Monday opened a wide door to possible military action against Iraq, saying the United States would use all tools available to oust Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

At a news conference, Bush reiterated official US policy aimed at ending Saddam's rule in Iraq. "It's a stated policy of this government to have regime change. And it hasn't changed," Bush said. "And we'll use all tools at our disposal to do so."

He said he was involved in all aspects of planning Iraq policy. "I'm involved in the military planning, diplomatic planning, financial planning, all aspects of reviewing all the tools at my disposal."

Expectations that Bush would order an attack on Iraq to oust its leader, accused of developing biological and chemical weapons, have risen this year after Bush described Iraq, along with Iran and North Korea, as belonging to an "axis of evil."

Several European governments have been concerned about any US military action to oust Saddam, a concern made more acute by a breakdown in talks last week to put United Nations weapons inspectors back in Iraq.

Bush declined on Monday to comment on a New York Times report last week that a draft military plan for an invasion of Iraq envisioned a multi-pronged attack with tens of thousands of US Marines and soldiers probably invading from Kuwait.

"Listen, I recognize there's speculation out there, but people shouldn't speculate about the desire of the government to have a regime change," Bush said. "And there's different ways to do it."

Bush also dismissed as "hypothetical" a question on whether he wanted Saddam removed before the end of his four-year term as president, which expires in January 2005.

The United States has frequently clashed militarily with the Iraqi leader ever since leading a coalition force in 1991 to expel him from Kuwait.

The United States said on Monday that the failure of talks between Iraq and the United Nations last week showed that Washington was right to suspect that Iraq is working on weapons of mass destruction.

"The fact that Iraq once again failed to take advantage of this opportunity . . . to come clean for the world, I think would have to indicate suspicions about what they're up to," State Department spokesman Richard Boucher told a daily briefing.

Iraq's most influential newspaper, Babel, on Monday blamed UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan for the failure of the talks. It said the failure was deliberate and in line with a US aim to "achieve its vicious goals in Iraq."

In the talks between Annan and Iraqi Foreign Minister Naji Sabri, Iraq did not agree to UN proposals that it let arms inspectors return to the country after a gap of 3 1/2 years.

Boucher said: "We're back in the same situation . . . Iraq has once again come and gone without indicating it intends to implement the requirements of the Security Council, without indicating that it intends to implement the obligations that Iraq took on freely and of itself 10 years ago."

Reuters

i cldnt believe
how long it was.

US considers mass inoculations to fight possible smallpox attack

WASHINGTON—US health officials said on Monday they were considering the possibility of mass inoculations to combat a smallpox attack.

Although they are still formulating the policy, a spokesman said such a widespread effort was among the scenarios being weighed in the event of any smallpox attack—now considered more likely after a series of anthrax-laced letters killed five people last fall and made 13 other severely ill.

At issue is whether it is better to immunize a lot of people with a vaccine that can have side-effects, or vaccinate fewer people, limiting the risk of side-effects but leaving more people vulnerable to infection. Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson is supposed to announce a decision within a few weeks.

An HHS spokesman said a report in The New York Times on Sunday that said 500,000 health and emergency workers would be vaccinated in the coming weeks was premature.

"There are a great many decisions that remain to be made by the secretary, including working with states to better understand exactly what the recommendation is," spokesman Bill Pierce said. "There is no number. There is only speculation by high-placed people."

The Washington Post on Monday quoted Jerome Hauer, a leading bio-terrorism expert and acting assistant secretary for emergency preparedness at HHS, as saying vaccinations could start in eight weeks. "At the end of the day, the numbers could be significantly greater than 500,000," he said.

US President George W. Bush said he was worried that people might become ill from the vaccine. "I haven't made any decisions as to who is going to be vaccinated or not," he told a news conference.

Even before the Sept. 11 attacks, and before the anthrax letters were sent, the government had been planning better preparations for a possible biological attack.

Anthrax and smallpox were at the top of the list of potential agents—because they are easily spread, can be deadly, and because they are hard to diagnose at first.

Smallpox, which was declared eradicated worldwide in 1980, is highly infectious and kills about 30 percent of patients.

The United States stopped routine vaccination in 1972. Only the US and Russian governments are supposed to have any samples of the virus, but experts say the former Soviet Union and possibly Iraq made smallpox into weapons.

Reuters

ORION'S HORSE REUTERS

The Horsehead Nebula, part of the star constellation of Orion, appears in this undated high resolution color image taken by the "Very Large Telescope" (VLT) facility in Chile.

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1245 Series of 2002.

Ex-WorldCom execs keep mum; lawmakers call for prison terms

WASHINGTON—Former top executives of WorldCom refused to testify to Congress on Monday about the company's $3.85 billion accounting debacle as lawmakers called for tough penalties, including prison, for those responsible.

Former Chief Executive Bernard Ebbers and former Chief Financial Officer Scott Sullivan, who were in charge when the company mishandled its accounts, invoked their constitutional right against self-incrimination.

Members of the US House Financial Services Committee were left to ask how Andersen failed to uncover the problem as WorldCom Inc's auditor, whether current management can rescue the company, and why Salomon Smith Barney analyst Jack Grubman promoted WorldCom almost to the bitter end.

Near the end of an almost nine-hour hearing, new CEO John Sidgmore said WorldCom was fighting hard for its survival, and turnaround plans could involve filing for bankruptcy protection from creditors.

Rep. Michael Oxley, the Financial Services Committee chairman, said it appeared that senior executives at the nation's No. 2 long-distance carrier had hidden expenses of almost $4 billion, disguising its true performance to keep earnings in line with analysts' estimates.

"And make no mistake, the consequences to this sort of criminal activity, should it be proved, should be severe, and that may mean time in federal prison," the Ohio Republican said in opening the hearing into WorldCom's decline.

The Securities and Exchange Commission has already sued the Clinton, Mississippi-based company, alleging that it improperly booked the expenses as capital spending for five quarters starting in 2001, hiding losses of $1.22 billion.

The scandal engulfing WorldCom, carrier of half of the world's Internet traffic, has overshadowed the collapse of Enron Corp. last year and joins problems found at other former high-fliers like Global Crossing Ltd. and Tyco International Ltd.

EBBERS taking the Fifth

President George W. Bush will present a plan on Tuesday aimed at reassuring investors rocked by the wave of corporate scandals that threatens to turn his pro-business reputation into a liability.

The Senate began debating an accounting reform bill on Monday that even critics predict will pass, but must still be married with a more business-friendly version authored by Oxley that has already passed the US House of Representatives.

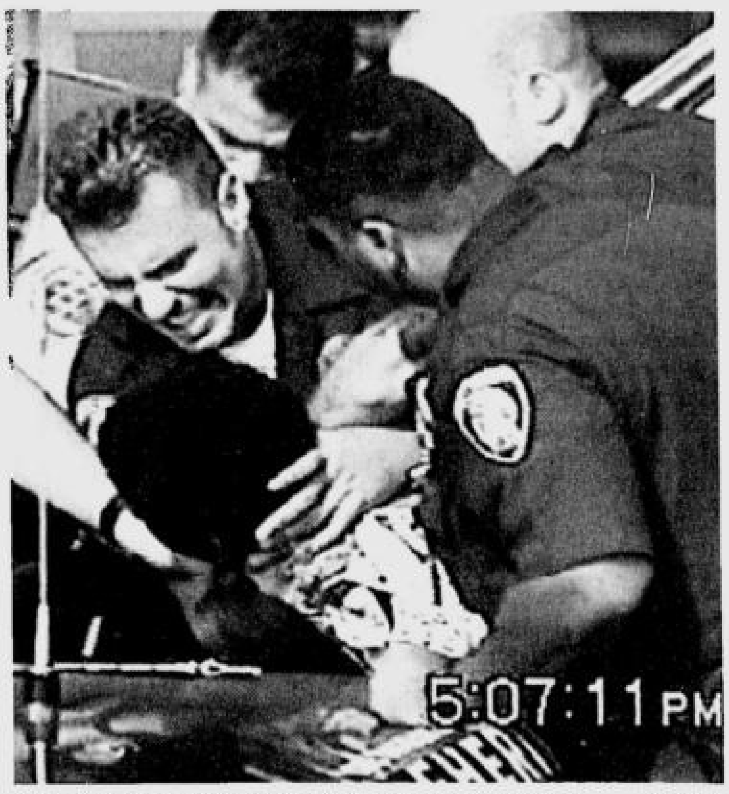
Sidgmore questioned why Andersen did not spot the problems, and he promised to try to save the company.

WorldCom is trying to negotiate new credit lines as it also combs financial statements from 1999 and 2000 for further possible accounting problems, examining seven to eight transactions brought to the attention of management.

Sidgmore said turnaround plans were coming together—some of which involved reorganizing operations under bankruptcy protection, holding creditors at bay. He also said WorldCom would ask for help reassuring various government agencies worried about contracts they have with WorldCom.

"We are fighting for our lives," Sidgmore said, after waiting six hours to testify. WorldCom is a "key component of our nation's economy and communications infrastructure."

Sidgmore also said he would put on hold for now his bonus package, which includes a $7.5-million retention bonus and a performance bonus that ranges from $1 million to $10 million. He currently receives a $1-million annual salary. *Reuters*



IS YOUR NAME RODNEY! HUH! HUH! REUTERS

Los Angeles police hold onto handcuffed teenager Donovan Chavez in the Los Angeles suburb of Inglewood on July 6, in this video image from footage acquired by Reuters television. The police officer was suspended on July 8 following the release of the videotaped footage of the incident, which took place at an Inglewood gas station after police tried to question the 16-year-old black teenager and his father. The tape was made by tourist Mitchell Crooks from his motel room across the street, and shows the white police officer picking up the handcuffed teen and slamming him face-down into a squad car, then striking him in the face as other police officers converge.

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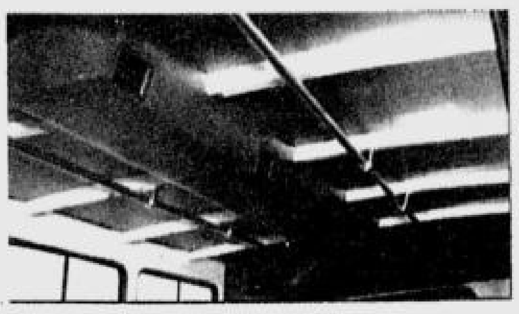

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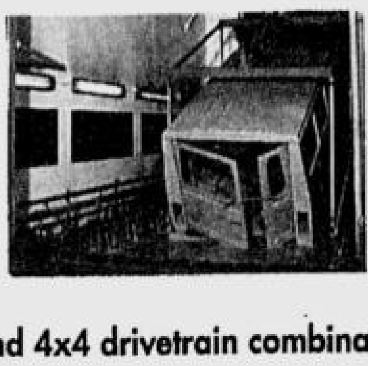

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Biggest trial of AIDS vaccine set in Thailand

BARCELONA, Spain—The world's biggest trial of a vaccine aimed at preventing HIV infection was announced here Monday, but AIDS campaigners remained in the dark about the outcome of another desperately-awaited vaccine in the test pipe.

The five-year trial will start in Thailand later this year, enrolling 16,000 volunteers, with the aim of priming the two arms of the immune system—antibodies and cells—to the human immunodeficiency virus.

The green light depends on final approval by the US and Thai authorities, which have military and civilian health institutes in the project, the organizers said on the sidelines of the 14th International AIDS Conference here.

Even though HIV was identified more than 20 years ago, there still is no vaccine or cure for it, although there is now a widening group of treatments to dampen virus levels in the body.

The Thai test will be the first mass assessment of a novel combination approach, but some scientists say trials on smaller groups of volunteers raise doubts about whether it will work.

The idea is to "prime" the body with one vaccine—Alvac-HIV, made by Aventis Pasteur of France—and then provide a boost with another, Aidsvax B/E, made by the US firm VaxGen, a unit of the biotech giant Genentech.

The trial will unfold among volunteers in Chon Buri and Rayong provinces in eastern Thailand.

Half of the participants will receive the two vaccines, injected at four occasions over the first six months, while the others will receive injections of a placebo, a dummy substance.

Alvac-HIV uses a harmless virus called canarypox in which selected HIV genes—tailored to the "E" strain of the HIV-1, which predominates in Thailand—are inserted.

The goal is that cells "infected" this way display the HIV bits on their surface, educating the body's cytotoxic lymphocytes into recognizing an intruding virus and destroying it.

Aidsvax aims at producing antibodies, which are designed to stick onto HIV's gp120 protein, used by the virus to latch onto immune cells and then infect them. *AFP*

Indonesia karaoke bar fire kills 46

JAKARTA, Indonesia—Rescue workers searched for charred bodies on the top floor of a burned out nightclub on Tuesday as authorities confirmed that 46 people had died in the blaze in south Sumatra province.

The club in the city of Palembang did not have proper fire exits, officials said. Rescuers had to blast through a wall to free dozens of people while others jumped to their deaths as flames engulfed the roof.

"We are looking on the top floor of the karaoke bar," said police Capt. Arum Prioyono. "It was full of people. We fear more may have died."

Firefighters earlier said they retrieved as many as 52 bodies. An official at the Palembang general hospital said the confusion about casualty number was due to the difficulty in identifying badly burned bodies.

Officials theorize that an electrical fault caused Sunday night's fire that raced through the multistory nightclub.

Palembang is an industrial city of nearly 1.5 million people, about 400 km northwest of Jakarta. In June 1998, 19 people died when a crowded shopping center there burned down. *AP*

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Luzon and Western Visayas will experience monsoon rains. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with rainshowers and thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Monsoon Rains	Hi 28°	Lo 24°
Baguio	Monsoon Rains	Hi 19°	Lo 16°
Tuguegarao	Monsoon Rains	Hi 33°	Lo 23°
Laoag	Monsoon Rains	Hi 32°	Lo 24°
Clark Zone	Monsoon Rains	Hi 26°	Lo 23°
Tagaytay	Monsoon Rains	Hi 25°	Lo 21°
Legazpi	Monsoon Rains	Hi 29°	Lo 25°
Calapan	Monsoon Rains	Hi 31°	Lo 23°
Iloilo/Bacolod	Monsoon Rains	Hi 28°	Lo 24°
Roxas	Monsoon Rains	Hi 33°	Lo 26°
Cebu	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 31°	Lo 25°
Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 35°	Lo 26°
Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 30°	Lo 24°
Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 33°	Lo 25°
Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32°	Lo 23°
Davao	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32°	Lo 23°

Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research/07/10/02

ROUNDUP

Farmer's remains found

KIDAPAWAN CITY—Soldiers recovered the remains of a farmer who was allegedly executed by New People's Army rebels in Makilala, Cotabato about 10 years ago. Lt. Fernando Inggot, team leader of the Army's 12th Special Forces, said the remains of Narciso Lopez, who was abducted by NPA rebels in Barangay Magboc, Tulunan in December 1991, was dug up from a shallow grave in Barangay Villaflores. Villaflores is about 7 kilometers from where Lopez was abducted. Inggot said a resident, who witnessed the execution, pointed to the location of the victim's grave.

Jailer rapes inmate

BATANGAS CITY—A female inmate jailed for theft at the Batangas provincial jail in Barangay Cuta of this city complained of having been repeatedly raped since June 15 by the jail's administrative officer right inside the cell. The 21-year-old inmate complained that the officer Pablito Tanyo, of Barangay Sta. Rita, this city had been sexually abusing her since June 15, after Tanyo promised to help her get out of jail. Police are now searching for Tanyo who went into hiding since the inmate filed the complaint.
Mei Magsino, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Gang member nabbed

LUCENA CITY—A suspected member of the notorious Medrano kidnap-for-ransom gang that operates in Southern Tagalog was arrested Friday in Barangay Binutas, Calauag. Police identified the suspect as Renato Matibag alias Ato, 43, and resident of the village. The suspect, who did not resist arrest, has a pending warrant of arrest in Plaridel, Bulacan with no bail recommended.
Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

3 rebels killed

CAMP NAKAR, Lucena City—Three unidentified suspected New People's Army rebels died while two government soldiers were wounded in a 30-minute firefight on Friday in Camarines Norte Maj. Jose Broso, Armed Forces Southern Luzon Command spokesperson, said soldiers chanced upon about 16 heavily armed rebels in Barangay Cabuluan, Sta. Elena. Government soldiers recovered four M16 rifles and anti-government documents in the area.
Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

PNP-Albay on alert

LEGAZPI CITY—The Philippine National Police in Albay has strengthened the security of its detachments and public assistance centers in the third district of the province, especially in Ligao City villages after getting reports the New People's Army will attack these facilities. Albay police director Supt. Pedro Tango supervised on Saturday the putting up of barbed wire and other reinforcing materials on these sites. He said he has also placed on red alert the Provincial Police Mobile Group.
Melanie Valenciano, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Woman's body fished out

HAGONOY, Bulacan—Residents fished out the body of a woman in a river in Barangay San Jose here on Saturday. Police identified the victim as Eva Galvez, 26. Her neighbors said they heard her and her live-in partner Lino de los Angeles fighting on Friday night. Police tagged De los Angeles as the prime suspect in Galvez's slay although they could not yet establish the motive for the murder.
Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Used clothing seized

BACOLOD CITY—The National Bureau of Investigation on Friday seized three trucks loaded with used clothing in Valladolid town, about 31 kilometers south of here. Arturo Nunag, NBI Bacolod chief, said the trucks and their cargo were seized for violating Republic Act 4653, which prohibits commercial importation of used clothing. Nunag said they did not know who owned the cargo and the trucks because the drivers refused to reveal their identities. The drivers told the NBI agents that they would confer with their lawyers first. *Carla Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Intelligence fund

DUMAGUETE CITY—The Provincial Peace and Order Council (PPOC) of Negros Oriental set aside P250,000 for police intelligence gathering. The PPOC approved the resolution during its meeting last week of June after Supt. Drusillo Bolodo, police director for Negros Oriental, told the council that the police were not discounting the possibility that splinter groups of the Abu Sayyaf might come to the province and stage some kidnapping activities. He said this possibility still remained even if the Abu Sayyaf threat had been diminished with the reported death of Abu Sabaya, the bandit group's spokesperson.
Alex Pal, PDI Visayas Bureau

30 PNP execs in Luzon resign

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—At least 30 provincial and city police directors in Luzon, including some in Metro Manila, have filed their courtesy resignation as an "unequivocal support" for seven top police officers relieved because of their alleged failure to stop jueteng.

"Now in order to show our sincere support (for) the fight against all forms of illegal gambling and to dispel any iota of doubt that we are motivated by personal interest and desire to hold on to our present posts, we hereby tender our courtesy resignation from our present positions," the police officials said in a statement signed on June 29.

A copy of the statement was furnished the INQUIRER by one of the seven relieved Philippine National Police officials.

The National Police Commission relieved Deputy Director General Edgar Aglipay of the National Capital Region police office, Chief Supt. Reynaldo Berroya of Central Luzon, Director Avelino Razon Jr. of Central Visayas, Director Domingo Reyes of Southern Tagalog, Senior Supt. Leonilo de la Cruz of Laguna, Senior Supt. Jose Antonio Salvacion of Cebu and Chief Supt. Nicolas Pasinos Jr. of the Western Police District.

Police directors in Aurora, Bataan, Bulacan, Pampanga, Nueva Ecija, Zambales, Angeles and Olongapo cities—all in Gentral Luzon—reportedly signed.

In Southern Tagalog, the statement was signed by police directors of Cavite City, Rizal, Quezon, Laguna, Batangas, Mindoro Oriental and Palawan.

In Cagayan Valley, the signatories held posts in Cagayan, Nueva Vizcaya and Quirino. In the Ilocos, the signatories were from Pangasinan, Ilocos Norte and La Union. Only one, from Benguet, signed from the Cordillera.

Police chiefs in Caloocan, Pasay, San Juan and Mandaluyong signed the statement.

Of the 10 who were asked to confirm if they signed the manifesto, seven did not reply. Two declined to comment and one claimed not seeing the statement.

The INQUIRER source said the manifesto was signed "on or after June 29."

According to the source, the statement has reached former PNP chief, Director General Leandro Mendoza, and new PNP chief, Director General Hermogenes Ebdane Jr.

In the manifesto, the signatories called their support for the sacked officers as a "collective action."

Referring to the Napolcom decision, they raised "serious concern for the arbitrary and whimsical exercise."

In relieving the seven officials, the Napolcom performs a "command function which by law and time-honored tradition is vested upon the chief of the Philippine National Police," they said.

In putting the seven officers on floating status, the Napolcom has "exce its authority," they said.

They said "justice and equi mand that due process must served before one's honor is take

They defended the seven o saying these have "continuously a riously supported the campaign a all forms of gambling."

They claimed that the 3,842 i 3,536 arrests and confiscation of aln P1 million in jueteng bets for April a May were "clear manifestations of aggre sive and diligent police enforcement."

Their resignation, they claimed, wa done to "dramatize the need for all th components of the holistic strategy t take action and fight the war against il legal gambling particularly jueteng."

"Otherwise, it will just be an exercise i futility for history is not on our side as dis missal or relief of officers had not cause the stoppage of this menace," they added.

Soldier slain, 8 wounded in Patikul, Sulu clash

ZAMBOANGA CITY—A member of the Army's elite Scout Ranger was killed while eight others were wounded as clashes resumed in Patikul, Sulu at around 10 a.m. yesterday.

Initial reports reaching the AFP Southern Command here said a wayward shell from a military mortar fire landed near a team from 14th Scout Ranger Company, which was operating against the Abu Sayyaf in Luba Hill in Barangay Tanum.

But in a press conference, Southcom chief Maj. Gen. Ernesto Carolina said the fatalities were hit by shelling from the bandit group led by Radulan Sahiron.

He said it was unlikely for the military to hit one of its own. "It was an encounter," he said.

Carolina withheld the identities of the soldiers involved in the incident "for their immediate families to be informed ahead."

The wounded soldiers were immediately airlifted to the Camp Navarro Hospital inside the Southcom headquarters here.

Col. Romeo Tolentino, commander of the Army's 104th Infantry Brigade based in Sulu, said the shell that hit the soldiers was a "counter-fire."

He said it came from an "unknown origin" and that he had ordered an investigation.

Tolentino said like the military, the Abu Sayyaf was also firing mortars "but we could not immediately locate their position."

"Our troops were conducting (a) softening campaign against the Abu Sayyaf, the enemy is about two kilometers away from our troops and the advanced forces requested for mortar support,'" he said.

Tolentino said unknown to the lead team, the Abu Sayyaf had already positioned themselves.

"They fired their mortar at the same time we were firing ours," he said. *Julie Alipala and Charlie Señase, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Measles kill 5 kids in Isabela

ECHAGUE, Isabela—Five children died and 11 others were taken to a hospital after a measles outbreak hit Barangay Silauan Norte here from June to early July, health officials here said.

The fatalities were identified as Esperanza Agcaoili, 6, and her sister Veronica, 2; King George Valdez, 3; Lovely Joy Farocha, 2; and Abigail Mangantulao, 2. The children, all residents of Silauan Norte, died from measles and its complications from June 21 to July 4.

Measles, a contagious disease caused by a virus and common among children, is characterized by inflammation of the mucus membranes, especially nasal passages, fever and skin eruption.

Eleven other children afflicted with measles were confined at the Don Primo Gaffud Hospital here.

Health workers in this town said most of the children were not taken immediately to the hospital or barangay health center when the symptoms of measles appeared.

Dr. Josephine Casco, Echague health officer, said the Department of Health in the region has sent additional anti-measles vaccines, kits and medicines to this town.

Four children also died of measles in General Santos City since Monday, bringing the death toll in that city to 11.

The epidemic was first monitored on Monday last week. *Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

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Diesel-fired plant in Boracay opposed

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—The Aklan provincial board is opposed to a proposal to the plan of the Mirant Philippines to build a diesel-power plant on the world famous Boracay Island.

"It is like inviting hell to Paradise Island," said provincial board ber Romeo Inocencio in a e interview with the INQUIRER.

cencio, who chairs the com- on environment, said the passed the resolution to a strong message" to President Macapagal-Arroyo and to the National Electrification Administration (NEA) that the construction of a power plant on the island was "non-negotiable."

Enrico Bucoy, general manager of the Aklan Electric Cooperative (Akelco), said the proposal was presented to the cooperative's board of directors last month by a team from the power firm.

The plan was to build a power generating plant in mainland Aklan, he said. There was no mention to install it on Boracay, he added.

But the proposal, a copy of which was obtained by the INQUIRER, showed that the putting up of a power generating plant on the island is among the options being considered.

Under the proposal submitted to NEA administrator Francisco Silva, the Mirant Philippines will install emergency diesel generators with a capacity of at least four megawatts as a short-term solution to the power crisis of the province.

As a long-term solution, the power firm will construct a diesel-powered plant with a capacity of at least seven megawatts in a site either in Boracay or in Barangay Caticlan, Malay town, across the island resort.

The proposed project that will cost $456.7 million requires Akelco to guarantee Mirant the exclusive right to supply electricity to Boracay Island.

The power firm is a subsidiary of Atlanta-based Mirant Corporation and is the largest independent power producer in the country. It owns and operates at least five power plants in the country.

But the contract of Mirant Philippines with the National Power Corporation for its Sual coal-fired thermal plant in Pangasinan is among the contracts of independent power producers found defective by a study of an inter-agency committee chaired by Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho.

The INQUIRER tried but failed to reach the representatives of Mirant Philippines for comment.

Bucoy said the only way for the province to stabilize its power supply was to have its own power generator.

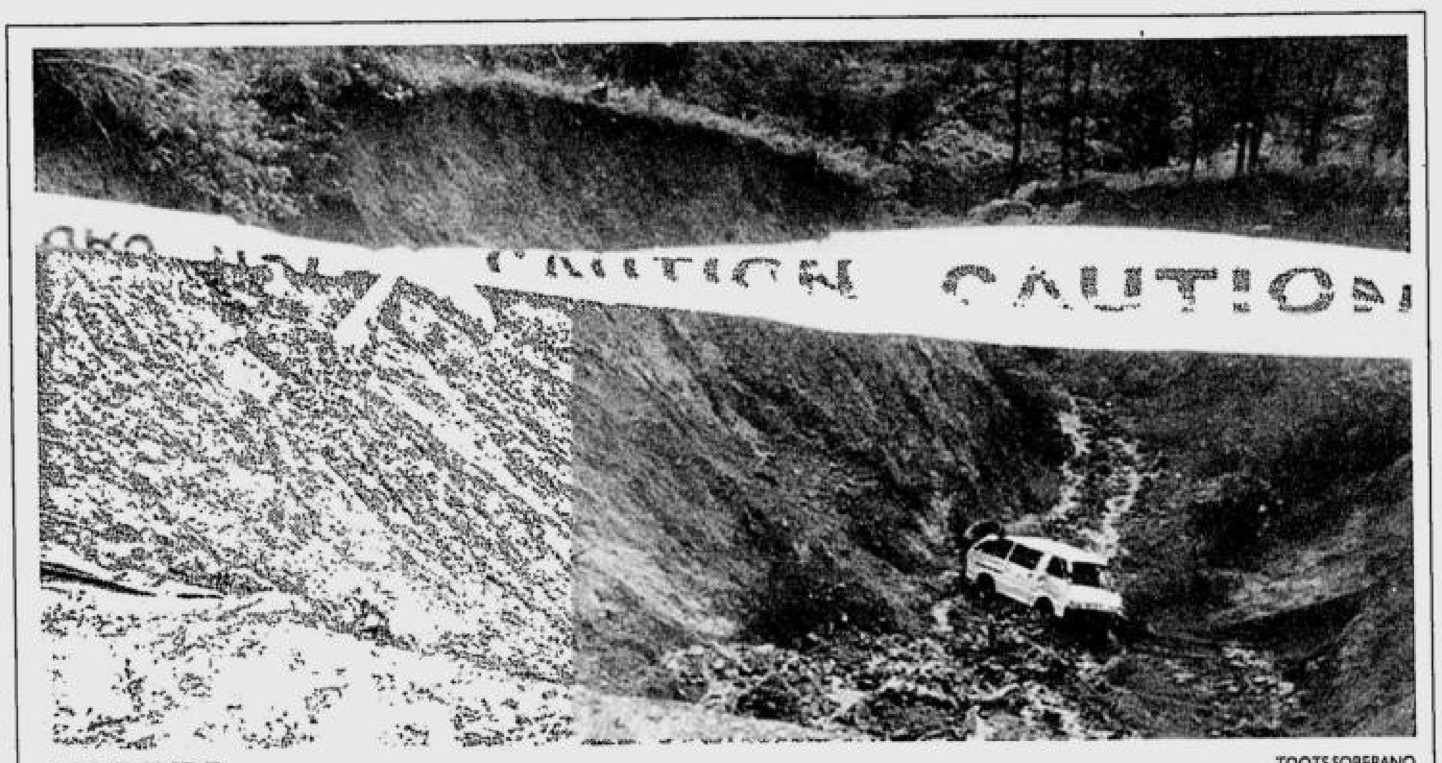
But he said the board was "keeping its options open" on the power firm's proposal.

Inocencio said they would agree with the installation of the power generating plants if it is located in the Aklan mainland.

The Napocor cut off electricity to Akelco last March for the failure of the cooperative to settle its debts reaching P109 million.

The blackout, which started on March 18, affected Aklan's 17 towns, including Boracay Island and two municipalities of Antique.

Power was restored on March 20 after a three-member NEA management team took over the operations of the cooperative but the brownouts continued.



TOOTS SOBERANO

LANDSLIDE
A municipal ambulance falls into a 150-foot ravine as a landslide causes a portion of the Halsema Highway to collapse, claiming the life of Felix Tayab Jr., barangay captain of Capongan, Tublay, Benguet. The 25-meter landslide also cut off vital farm-to-market transport of vegetables in the Benguet.

rain of kidnap of Davao City Sino kid falls

DAVAO CITY—Police authorities here have filed kidnapping charges against the suspects in last week's abduction of a two-year-old son of a Filipino-Chinese businessman here.

As this developed, authorities yesterday also announced the arrest of the sixth suspect and one of the alleged masterminds in the kidnapping of Jeremy Ching.

Chief Insp. Edgar Perez, chief of the Talomo District Police precinct, said Dominador Buntog Jr. was arrested on Saturday afternoon during a police operation in Barangay Sirid in Calinan District.

Buntog's arrest came after Enrique Anacion, cook of the victim's family, was arrested in Alegria, Surigao del Sur.

Anacion provided Buntog's identity to the police, claiming the latter was the real mastermind behind the abduction.

Johnny Ching, Jeremy's father, said he was determined to file charges against Anacion, his wife Jurlita, Buntog, Erlinda Cabrero, Delon Montayre and Alice Molina.

As for the boy's nanny, who was used by the kidnappers to get hold of the boy, the city prosecutor's office said she could be used as a witness against the suspects.

The 15-year old nanny received instruction from Anacion on Wednesday last week to bring the boy near the SM Department Store in Ecoland Subdivision, a few meters away from the Chings' residence in Juna Subdivision.

Anacion told the nanny, his wife's niece, that he was following Mrs. Ching's instruction.

The nanny did as she was told, but before reaching SM, she said she spotted Anacion walking along Tulip Drive. She said she was motioned to disembark from the *trisikad* and take a jeep instead.

The nanny said she, the boy and Anacion then took a jeep for Bangkerohan District, and checked in at a local lodge.

She spent the whole night on Wednesday inside the lodge with the boy.

The following day, the nanny said, she called her aunt Jurlita and asked her to fetch her and the boy.

Jurlita went to the lodge with Cabrero and Molina. They then went back to Juna Subdivision with the boy.

Jurlita said they have accompanied the nanny to return the boy, but police operatives arrested them instead. *Anthony S. Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Southcom investigating Julabbi

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Ustadz Shariff Mohsin Julabbi, the former Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) spokesperson for Western Mindanao, is in hot water.

Southern Command chief Maj. Gen. Ernesto Carolina said Julabbi was constantly communicating with one of the most wanted Abu Sayyaf leaders in Sulu, Radulan Sahiron.

Carolina said it was "turning out that he (Julabbi) is now speaking in behalf of the Abu Sayyaf."

"He admitted that he has a day-to-day contact with Radulan," Carolina said.

Carolina said they were gathering evidence prior to the filing of charges against Julabbi.

"And if it is established that he is a spokesperson of the ASG, then he is an accessory to the crime," the Southcom chief said.

But Julabbi said the military was engaged in fault-finding. He said if he will be accused of crimes he did not commit, "I don't have any recourse but to reveal the names of the government (men) who were involved in direct negotiations with ransom with the Abu Sayyaf Group despite the standing policy of no ransom."

Julabbi said his only mistake, which yielded positive results, was communicating with Sahiron for the release of kidnap victim Lydio Castro, a small time fisher abducted on November 9.

He said after Castro's release, he has stopped communicating with Sahiron.

"He (Sahiron) is no longer calling, *tapos na ang pagtatawag, sarado na ang anumang communication lines namin* (all communication lines are closed)," he said. *Julie S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

C. Norte electric coop seeks PPA abolition

DAET, Camarines Norte—The Camarines Norte Electric Cooperative (Canoreco), which claims to have 45,000 member-consumers, unanimously approved during it 20th general membership assembly on Saturday a resolution calling for the abolition of the controversial purchased power adjustment imposed on all electric consumers nationwide.

It also approved another resolution calling for the filing of a formal petition before the local court for the PPA's abolition.

Despite the low turnout of members at the Camarines Norte Agro-Sports Center here, Canoreco was able to muster the required quorum.

The resolution was introduced on the floor by former Sangguniang Panlalawigan member and veteran broadcaster Noel Querubin of the Daet North District.

All those who attended the assembly, including all the members of the Canoreco board of directors and Governor Jesus "Atoy" Typoco Jr., signed the petition against the PPA.

Judge Fulgencio Regare, who acted as guest speaker, urged Canoreco member-consumers to follow the lead of former Senator Juan Ponce Enrile and company in impleading the Meralco and the National Power Corp. in their petition to abolish the PPA.

He warned that the failure of the local electric consumers to do so might exclude them from benefiting from any favorable ruling that the court might render on the Enrile petition. *Bing Abano, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

More upland farmers flock to Dumaguete

DUMAGUETE CITY—The Department of Social Welfare and Development here has noted an increasing number of farmers from the mountain villages of Negros Oriental who have migrated to this city to make a living out of garbage.

Tinang Jubela, city DSWD welfare officer, told reporters on Monday that the farmers, mostly from the town of Mabinay, resettled along the banks of the Banica River, gradually adding to the number of squatters in the area, particularly in Barangays Batinguel and Candau-ay

"Each month, we notice at least three new houses being built along the Banica but we cannot stop them because it would be inhuman," she said.

She, however, could not say how many families now live along the Banica River

Jubela said they have reported the matter to Barangay Captain Segunda Dicen of Candau-ay, but she also could not stop the influx.

The farmers, she said, initially stayed with their relatives, who were making a living by recycling garbage. As such, the city government cannot compel them to leave.

As the farmers adjusted to their new livelihood, Jubela said they started building their homes by the riverbank.

Jubela said there is big money in recycling garbage. "They may look dirty but they actually earn a minimum of P300 per day," she said.

The city government had earlier indicated its resolve to stamp out the squatting problem here, with the eviction of newly settled squatters in a dry riverbed, which had become part of the Canlas Subdivision in Barangay Bagacay.

The city government had also served notice to squatters living on top of the Tubod creek and had given them one month to dismantle their homes. *Alex V. Pal, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Killings continue in Mt. Diwalwal, despite agreement to end rivalry

DAVAO CITY—Killings in the gold-rush area Mt. Diwata in Monkayo, Compostela Valley have resumed less than a week after President Macapagal-Arroyo told miners to end violence in the gold rush area.

Reports reaching the Southern Mindanao Police Command said four men gunned down a miner at around 11 p.m. on Saturday.

The victim, identified as Jesus Milay, was an employee of Blucor Minerals Corp., one of the mining groups involved in the long-standing dispute in the gold-rush area.

The report said Milay, of Upper Ulip, Monkayo, died after the suspects shot him in the head and in different parts of his body.

The day before, gunmen also killed Arnold Tabigue, an employee of JB Management and Mining Corp. (JBBMC), a firm identified with Monkayo Mayor Joel Brillantes.

After the President's order for the miners to get their acts together, they announced that they have reached an agreement on how to end the bloody rivalry over control of the gold-rich area, more popularly known as Mt. Diwalwal.

Ms Macapagal even appointed Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte to oversee the resolution of the conflict.

Last week, Duterte vowed to disarm the miners to avoid bloodbath in the area.

But Franco Tito, the self-proclaimed spokesperson of the small-scale miners, said despite Duterte's warning to miners, the killings did not stop.

Tito said the toll from the disputes has reached more than 80 since the gold mine was discovered in 1980.

He said most of the deaths were unreported because the main players kept them secret.

Chief Supt. Eduardo Matillano, Southern Mindanao police director, said he believed Tito's death toll figure was only half of the number of those who died in the continuing conflict.

Matillano said that although official police figures only showed 40 deaths since 1980, he believed that the practice of big players to put a lid on violence in the area has resulted to the underreporting of casualties.

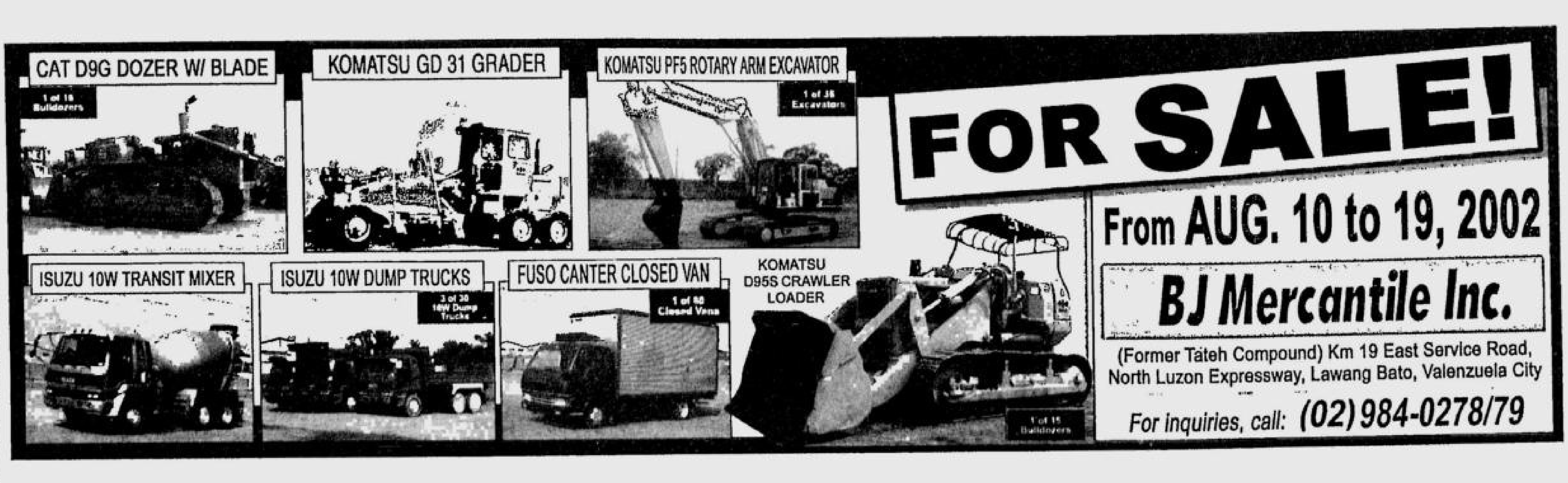
As this developed, Duterte said while he support the need to end the crisis, he was behind Brillantes' efforts to shut down illegal mining plants.

"If he deems it fit . . . I am 100-percent supportive of his action," Duterte said.

Brillantes earlier ordered the closure of several processing plants claiming its operations were polluting the Naboc river, the main source of irrigation in the province.

But those affected, who belong to the small-scale mining category, have defied the order saying it was Brillantes' way of stifling competition.

They charged that Brillantes' JBBMC and its foreign partners wanted to control the mine-rich area. *Anthony S. Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau*



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Editor **Jun Bandayrel** ◎ *Bureau Chief* **Rolando B. Fernandez**

The return of Apo Anno as ancestor of Igorots

By Delmar Cariño
Buguias, Benguet

A BENGUET official has called for the protection of the mummy of Apo Anno to preserve mummification as a sacred cultural heritage among the Cordillerans.

Apo Anno, an ancestor of the Kankanaey, Kalanguya and Ibaloi tribes, is believed to be the first leader to be mummified here due to his reign that was marked with peace and prosperity.

Saying that mummification is no longer possible now, Benguet Board Member Sario Copas said efforts should be exerted to preserve all Cordillera mummies, aside from Apo Anno, for future generations to appreciate the custom's social and political relevance.

In a paper sent to the Igorot International Conference in London, Copas said: "The practice is done with the approval and intervention of the unseen. Its process may still be known but its secret is buried with the old culture in which the spirits are in commune with the living."

Copas was supposed to go to the London National Museum last week to talk on the genealogy and cultural history of Apo Anno before a huge gathering of Igorot professionals abroad.

Barangay Natubleng in Buguias, Benguet, made headlines in 1999 when elders held a weeklong feast to welcome Apo Anno's return following 81 years of disappearance.

Residents said Jorge Estoesta stole Apo Anno's mummified body in 1918 during the Spanish regime and brought it to Don Antonio Jimenez and Cariño Lacson, reported to be wealthy collectors at that time.

The mummy was later sold to Magdalena Cortez who donated it to the National Museum in 1984.

Elaborate ceremonies

Pressed by provincial officials, the museum returned Apo Anno here in elaborate ceremonies. The body is now safely entombed in a cave.

Copas said Apo Anno gained so much respect in his lifetime that his mummification was a way to perpetuate his good deeds.

"His mummification and entombment will forever remind succeeding generations to emulate his deeds," he said.

In his paper, "The Return of an Ancestor of Tribes," Copas said the advent of Christianity and modernization almost confined Apo Anno's memory to oblivion.

"In fact, the various tribes became separated and forgot that they belong to the same region," he said.

But with the return of Apo Anno, the importance of mummification has been revitalized, Copas said.

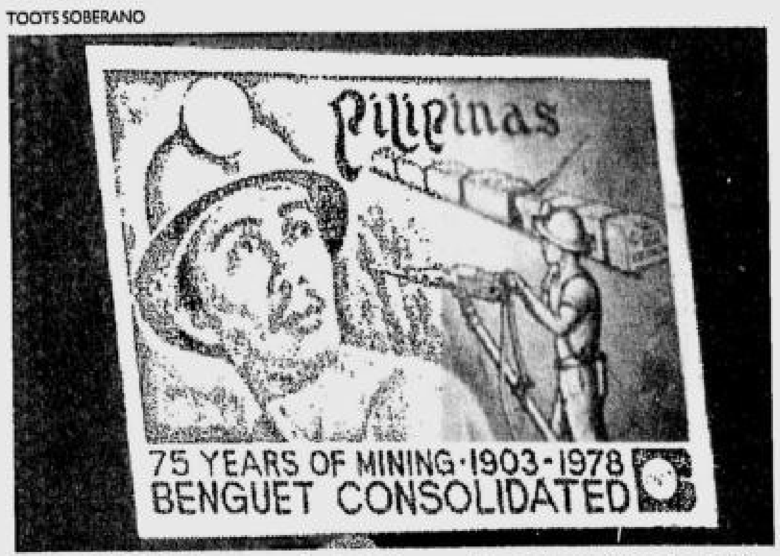
THE MUMMY of Apo Anno. FILE PHOTO

He lamented that mummification later became corrupted as even those "undeserving" were mummified.

"But their bodies just the same gave way to nature because their mummification was meant (to be) status symbols or (for) image building," he said.

Declaring that no one deserves to be mummified now, Copas said the practice needs the blessing of Kabunian, god of the natives, and the spirits.

TOOTS SOBERANO



SANTIAGO Badongen as depicted in a postage stamp issued in 1978.

Benguet's mining icon

HOMETOWN *Snapshots*

SANTIAGO **Badongen** will always be remembered by his colleagues in the mining town of Itogon in Benguet as the man who walked away with five pieces of tobacco cigars as a gift from the late strongman **Ferdinand Marcos**.

Badongen, 75, cited as the country's best miner, succumbed to pneumonia on June 20 in his house in Barangay Balatoc in Itogon.

He was considered by his townmates as a mining icon after he was cited by Marcos as the country's best miner and one of the top 10 Filipino workers in April 1976.

Other miners would have considered Badongen's feat as pure luck but his supervisors in Benguet Corp. (formerly the Benguet Consolidated) would say otherwise.

Andres Marzan, a retired safety mining engineer, said Badongen was the "most hardworking, productive and honest miner" that Benguet Corp. has ever had.

"He was very industrious, he works beyond the capacity of a good worker, that is why he always earns twice as much as his salary. He was never implicated in high grading (or gold stealing), unlike other miners who tend to steal at the sight of the gold in front of them," Marzan recalled.

Badongen bested 3,000 other miners in the country during the 1976 search. Marcos, impressed by Badongen's record, asked him what he wanted as a gift. "Except for my wife," Marzan quoted Marcos as telling Badongen.

Badongen, who spoke Ilocano, was not prepared for the question. "Had we anticipated it, we would have coached Badongen to ask the President for a house and lot or a scholarship for his children. Badongen just asked for five pieces of tobacco cigars," Marzan said.

The company also honored Badongen with a life-sized bronze statue in 1977. The statue, depicting Badongen as holding a pickaxe and ready to strike a tunnel wall, was installed in Barangay Virac, 5 km away from Balatoc proper.

Aside from the statue, a commemorative postage stamp was printed in 1980 to honor him. **Estrella Badongen-Nacar**, Badongen's youngest daughter, said her father did receive royalty from the postage stamps. "But he never complained," she said. *Desiree Caluza*

Rimpy takes a bride

REP. **JUAN Pablo Bondoc**, nephew of the late Senate President **Gil Puyat**, married **Paula Locsin**, daughter of Ormoc Mayor **Carmelo Locsin** and Leyte Rep. **Ma. Victoria Locsin**, in a civil rite in Macabebe, Pampanga on June 14.

BONDOC

The church wedding of Bondoc, 33, popularly known in Pampanga as Rimpy, and Locsin, 25, is set at the Sanctuario de San Jose on Sept. 7.

Bondoc is the grandson of industrialist Jose Puyat, the older brother of the late Senate President, and the son of the late Pampanga Rep. **Emigdio Bondoc**. The Bondocs and the Puyats come from Guagua, Pampanga.

President **Macapagal-Arroyo** leads the list of their wedding sponsors. They include businessman **Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco Jr.**, Bondoc's uncles **Jose** and **Aristeo Puyat**, Rep. **Neptali Gonzales**, former Gov. **Johnny Remulla** and Locsin's aunt, Gov. **Remedios Petilla**.

Msgr. **Guido Aliwalas**, a family friend, will officiate at the wedding mass. Co-officiating are Pampanga Archbishop **Paciano Aniceto** and the Leyte Archbishop **Pedro Dean**.

Bondoc, Harvard-trained lawmaker and a minority opposition leader in the House, originally planned to marry when he is 38, like his father.

"But she came too soon. I found the right person in Paula," he said of his girlfriend of more than a year.

The two met in Congress while Locsin, a political science graduate of Ateneo de Manila University, worked as a consultant in the House committee on rules. *Tonette Orejas*

Who will help these Aetas?

By Tonette Orejas
Clark Special Economic Zone

WANTED: P150,000. When that amount is not raised before July 22, two Aetas, representing 70,000 aborigines around Mt. Pinatubo in Central Luzon, will not be able to make it to the summit of the United Nations 20th session of the Working Group on Indigenous Peoples in Geneva, Switzerland.

The money, to cover two roundtrip tickets worth $1,500 (about P75,000) each, are so important for Chito Balintay, chair of the Pagkakaisa ng Aeta sa Pinatubo, and Wida Cosme, the first Aeta to finish law school.

"We're after the representation of our tribe," said Cosme, 23, who now works at the legal department of the state-owned Clark Development Corp.

Balintay, also a pastor, said they wanted to attend the UN summit to exercise the right to be heard, to contribute constructive policies for the survival and development of indigenous peoples and to forge solidarity with other tribes.

"It's for our future," said Cosme, who in aspiring to be a lawyer, is a trail blazer for Aeta women.

Cosme, who is working to pay for her review classes for the bar examinations, obtained her law degree at the Harvardian College in the City of San Fernando last year.

She said her education was funded by her earnings as a working student and by scholarship grants from government and non-government organizations.

To Balintay and Cosme, the summit is a good chance to tell the world about the plight of Pinatubo Aetas, according to the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) commissioner, Pablo Santos, also an Aeta.

'Well prepared'

Balintay and Cosme said they are "well prepared" to speak before the world's largest gathering of indigenous peoples, which will held from July 22 to 27.

Since they were chosen by the NCIP to attend the Geneva meet, both have tried as much to raise the funds for what they call an "important journey."

But the help have been coming in trickles. Sadly, the NCIP is cash-strapped.

With the rains lashing the Pinatubo areas now, their fellow Aetas could not sell their harvests of camote (sweet potatoes) and set aside the income for their airfare.

The main staple is reserved for the next months when planting is not feasible, they said.

Balintay and Cosme are not worrying about their accommodations because the Swiss Juhldahl Foundation agreed to provide this when the two stay in Geneva.

The Aetas felt and reported the initial signs of Mt. Pinatubo's reawakening in 1991. Their timely reporting prompted the government to act fast to warn and save three million people in the direct path of danger.

To date, the Aetas are said to be the only tribe in the Philippines that has experienced and survived a modern-day volcanic eruption.

The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology has documented their ways of detecting the signs of natural disasters and coping with these—considered as contributions to cultures that tended to be detached from the ways of nature.

The June 1991 blasts sent some 50,000 Aetas on a mass exodus from their ancestral abode. The marathon of evacuations and epidemics in refugee camps killed more than 1,000 Aetas, mostly children.

Balintay can be reached at mobile phone number 0918-503-3771 and Cosme at (045) 5999000 local 941 (CDC legal department).

Bontocs use FPIC to assert land rights

By Maurice Malanes
Bontoc, Mt. Province

FPIC sounds like an acronym for an unwelcome transnational corporation.

But 10 Bontoc women, many of them elderly, came knocking at the doors of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) provincial office recently, complaining that a contractor failed to get the women folk's FPIC in a road-widening project in Samoki village in Bontoc, Mt. Province.

FPIC stands for "free and prior informed consent," a salient provision of the 1997 Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (Ipra), the law that finally fulfilled the government's constitutional mandate to officially recognize the rights of indigenous peoples to their ancestral land, domain and resources.

Under the FPIC process, any private company, government-controlled corporation or government line agency must consult first the members of an indigenous community before embarking on a project. The project cannot proceed if the affected community doesn't allow it.

The 10 women, who belong to the Fakingas clan, took turns in telling the NCIP provincial personnel here that the Department of Public Works and Highways and a contractor had failed to consult the clan members over the widening last month of the Bontoc-Banaue national road along Sitio Sukit in Samoki.

The widening, they claimed, destroyed their clan wood lot and *uma* (swidden upland farms).

In a letter, the clan members also demanded from the DPWH district office to withhold payments to the contractor "pending dialogue and documented agreement with the proper clan members."

The letter added that the DPWH and the contractor violated the Ipra as they failed to get the FPIC of the clan members. The DPWH has yet to answer the demands of the clan.

Wilson Kalangeg, NCIP provincial legal officer, said his office would coordinate the dialogue between the two parties, and possibly come to a compromise agreement.

The still unresolved tiff between the Fakingas clan, on one hand, and the DPWH and the contractor, on the other, is just one of a few cases here where indigenous folk are asserting their ancestral land rights, as stipulated by the Ipra.

Controversial

A more celebrated case was the controversial proposed relay tower of Smart Communications Inc. at Mt. Polis near the border of Mt. Province and Ifugao.

Residents of Bayyo village (pop: 500) in Bontoc, through their barangay council, last March passed a resolution which sought to stop the tower construction.

According to the villagers, Smart failed to get the villagers' FPIC. But official minutes of NCIP-Mt. Province quoted a Smart official as saying that the company "secured in good faith" a building permit in Banaue, presuming that the construction site was within Ifugao's domain.

After a series of negotiations, Bayyo residents, in a barangay resolution, said they would finally allow Smart to continue building the tower if the company complied with at least seven demands.

These demands included an P8,000-monthly royalty with 5 percent yearly increase, financial aid for the building of a barangay hall, scholarship grant to five deserving college students from the village, and employment of qualified residents upon operation.

The residents also demanded that Smart provide electricity to the village, secure a building permit from the Bontoc municipal government and an environmental compliance certificate from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Bontoc.

That residents of Hungduan, Ifugao were also claiming the area where the Smart relay tower was being proposed made the issue more complicated. This complication apparently prompted Smart to abandon the project, a source told the INQUIRER.

"This (proposed relay tower) has become so messy that the company finally decided to pack up and leave," the source said, adding that the company would not pursue a project in an area where residents [illegible] willing to chase with [illegible] workers who [illegible] tower.

Ifugao, according to the source, was supposed to benefit from the proposed relay station. Until now, one can hardly contact someone in Ifugao, which is famous for its rice terraces, through cellular phones.

If built, the proposed facility can also benefit Mt. Province in case the province's cell tower breaks down.

Smart also met some opposition when it negotiated for the construction of a cell tower in the tourist town of Sagada, whose residents also invoked the FPIC provision of the IPRA.

But the company and the Sagada community led by Mayor Tom Killip had agreed on a compromise. The upland community, which is known for its hanging coffins and scenic rice terraces, has since been hooked to the rest of the world through cell phones.

Like the rest of the country, Sagada and Bontoc folks have also been hooked to cellular phone text messages.

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Clinic mix-up: White couple, black twins

From page A1

British press reports.

The Sun newspaper said that the white mother wanted to keep the twins after forming a bond with them.

A court battle to determine the babies' "real parents," however, lies ahead. The high court has scheduled a preliminary hearing on Oct. 10.

It is the first reported case of its kind in Britain.

"The issue is currently under injunction, so it will be inappropriate for us to comment," a spokesperson for the National Heath Service said on condition of anonymity.

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"It is something that we have dreaded happening all along . . . It is an absolute nightmare for all concerned," The Sun quoted a source at the NHS as saying.

"Great steps have been taken to ensure that this sort of thing never happens. It must be a one in a million chance. The big problem now is: Who are the real parents of the twins?"

About 27,000 couples unable to have children the natural way seek in-vitro fertilization in Britain every year.

Under the technique, sperm provided by the man and eggs by the woman are joined in a laboratory to produce a fertilized egg. The resulting embryo—often two or three at a time—is then implanted into the woman's womb.

Experts said a mistake could have occurred in one of three ways in the IVF process.

- The wrong sperm could have been used to fertilize the right egg.
- The right sperm could have been used to fertilize the wrong egg.
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A British Medical Association spokesperson said the case was "a tragedy for all involved."

"For the courts this will be a nightmare to decide what to do. Based on the law of surrogacy, the children would go to the woman who carried them, but this is a new case," the spokesperson added.

In 1998, New Yorker Donna Fasano gave birth to twins—one black, one white—after the wrong embryo was implanted in her womb.

The white child was her biological son. But the black child was no relation, and his biological parents eventually won custody of the infant. ***Reports from AP, AFP and Reuters***

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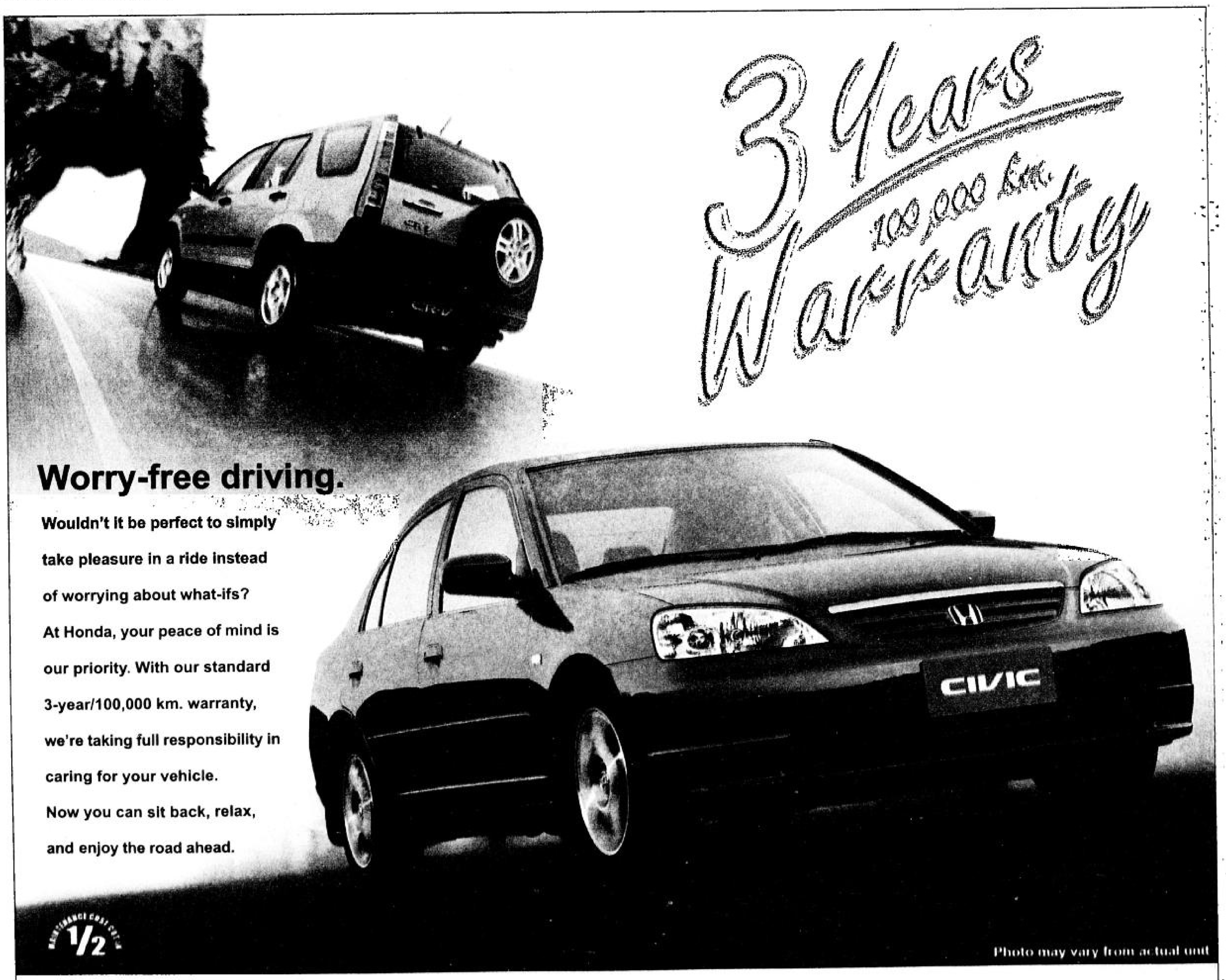

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Clinic mix-up: White couple, black twins

From page A1

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HONDA

Move over Dirty Harry, Duterte's here

From page A1

He added: "My policy is that if you are a kidnapper and a drug pusher, you put yourself and your life on the line."

His stance stole the thunder from Ms Macapagal. But the President did not mind.

She was visibly pleased as the mayor lengthily spoke about his methods to get rid of criminals, which observers say border on vigilantism.

During the open forum, Ms Macapagal turned to Duterte to ask his opinion about kidnappers.

Applause

Duterte, whom the President asked last week to head a Philippine National Police "consultative task force" on kidnapping and illegal drugs, took half an hour giving his opinion, eliciting applause and chuckles from the audience, including the President.

"There are loose talk, sordid talk about what I do. You have the human rights (groups), the courts, Ombudsman. Let them worry about it. But we can't just sit down just because we are afraid to face charges in court," Duterte said.

He related how a certain "Kapitan Inggo," a man accused of rape and other crimes, came one time to his office to shake hands.

"Now he's gone. I don't know (where he is). Don't ask him," he said, as the audience applauded. Duterte said criminals "threaten to kill, so what we'll do is we kill them, too," to more applause.

According to him, he gives criminal suspects the chance to leave Davao City peacefully. "After that I strike. *Wala itong yabang ha?*"

"You must realize, you criminals, that you don't have a monopoly on evil in this country," he said, prompting Ms Macapagal to burst into laughter.

Duterte said he phrased his iron-fist policy in a way that ordinary criminals could understand: *"Dito sa Davao, isa lang ang tigas. To-its lang. Isa lang ang gwapo.*

"Kasi kung maraming gwapo, maraming tigas, walang direksyon."

The mayor said the people of Davao supported him "because they know that whatever I do, I'm doing it for them," earning him more applause.

Bleeding hearts

"You know very well that killing can never be the solution of what ails this country. We know that poverty is the No. 1 cause of our hardships. But I don't follow the bleeding hearts of libertarians. Just because that we are in the midst of poverty, we would allow crime to overwhelm this country, otherwise we would sink," he said.

"Either we solve this problem during our generation or we forget about the future of our children."

Duterte said he was against forming "task forces" within the PNP. But he said he was willing to work with Ebdane.

"I'm not (working) above or beside the PNP (chief). I'll be working under you," he concluded.

"Wow, *galing*," Ms Macapagal finally interjected, ending Duterte's speech.

Some Filipino-Chinese businessmen welcomed Duterte's hardline stance against members of the kidnap-for-ransom gangs.

"His advocacy is very practical. I think an iron-fist (policy) will solve the problem of kidnappings. This will lead to economic progress," said John Ng, president of the Federation of the Filipino-Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry Inc.

Most of the kidnap victims come from the Chinese-Filipino community.

Reservations

Teresita Ang-See, chair of the Citizen's Action Against Crime (CAAC) and Carina Agarao, president of the Crusade Against Violence, however, voiced reservations over Duterte's proposal.

"We can't tolerate a short-cutting of the law. In the end we will be victims of this kind of short-cuts," Ang-See said.

Agarao said Duterte would still have to refine his proposals with Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo.

"CAV for one is against salvaging and the like. While we will benefit from the dedication of Duterte, the mayor has a thing or two to learn from us here in Metro Manila," she said.

"For one, he will be under the glare of public opinion, something officials in Mindanao are not subjected to. Plus of course, Commission on Human Rights is very active as well as the media. Then of course there is the monitoring of groups like ours," Agarao said.

Ang-See pointed out that Duterte couldn't replicate his method of dealing with criminals in Metro Manila.

"Davao is vastly different from Metro Manila. In Davao, they can seal the two exits, and there's no way that the criminals can run away," she said.

Both Ang-See and Agarao, however, had good words for Duterte. "We have a lot of lessons to learn from Mayor Duterte especially in his success in mobilizing the community to help him," Ang-See said.

"Suffice it to say that we believe in the man, and I believe that he's willing to adjust so that he can meet the targets," Agarao said.

Not in public

Duterte's proposal drew mixed reactions from police officials.

"He should not have said that in public," a police director, who asked not to be named, adding that the best way to solve kidnapping is to improve the investigative skills of policemen to ensure the successful prosecution of cases against kidnap suspects.

"I agree with him. Look what happened to Faisal Marohombsar," said a police chief superintendent, who also asked not to be named.

He was referring to the alleged operations chief of the Pentagon gang who escaped from his detention cell in Camp Crame last month.

GMA: It's all-out war vs 21 kidnap gangs

From page A1

these will also be targeted. She said she would monitor the PNP's progress in going after each syndicate, the same way she followed the military's campaign against identified Abu Sayyaf members.

One unit

Following the President's order to focus the anti-kidnap campaign on the 21 active kidnap groups, government and police officials and private-sector representatives recommended the creation of one anti-kidnap body to handle all kidnap cases.

"This would ensure a smooth coordination through the PNP and a unified accountable body," North Cotabato Gov. Manny Piñol said last night, reading from a report of an anti-KFR workshop group.

Deputy Director General Hermogenes Ebdane Jr., the new PNP chief, said that an anti-kidnapping task unit would be formed a few days from now. The unit will replace all abolished anti-kidnap task forces, including the National Anti-Crime Commission Anti-KFR Task Force (Naktaf).

At the start of the summit, Ebdane admitted that "the absence of a unified command" to handle kidnapping cases had been a major stumbling block.

The anti-KFR workshop group also recommended the lifting of the moratorium on death penalty to curb kidnapping. "We believe that this would discourage the kidnappers from continuing their trade," Piñol said.

The group also made the following recommendation to plug "gaps" in the anti-kidnapping drive:

- Strengthen the data base on KFR groups.
- Create dedicated courts of KFR cases, and designate special prosecutors to handle KFR cases.
- Strictly implement the no-ransom policy.
- Train anti-KFR personnel in negotiation and surveillance continuously.
- Set up a victims' support system.

When Ebdane assumed office last week, the President ordered him to eliminate kidnap syndicates within one year. Combating the problem is crucial to attracting more foreign investment to generate jobs and ease poverty, Ms Macapagal said.

No keynote

As she promised, Ms Macapagal did not deliver a keynote speech. After briefings by various police officials, the President asked: "What I want to (know is) what are we up against? How many KFR syndicates are there? That will be the basis for tracking our progress this year."

Ebdane replied that the PNP was aware of 21 kidnap gangs, down from 26 last year.

In his briefing, he said of the 66 kidnap cases Naktaf handled in the past 10 months, only 32 were solved. Twelve kidnap suspects were killed while 116 were arrested, he added.

Interviewed during a break, Ebdane disputed the claim of Citizens' Action Against Crime head Teresita Ang-See that kidnappings rose during the first six months of the year.

"I talked to Tessie. She said she never gave such data. She's angry at the (INQUIRER) reporter because the data didn't come from her. And I believe her," he said.

But the INQUIRER did talk to her, and received the kidnapping statistics from her by fax, on Monday.

Ebdane also said a database on kidnapping syndicates had been set up, while surveillance and other equipment are being modernized with a P200-million fund allocated by the President, he said.

During the summit, AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Roy Cimatu, Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte, Manila Mayor Lito Atienza, Cotabato Gov. Emmanuel Piñol and Fr. James Reuter were seated at the President's table.

Among the top PNP officials who showed up yesterday were five of the seven generals recently relieved for their failure to stop "jueteng" operations.

These were Deputy Director General Edgardo Aglipay, Director Avelino Razon and Chief Superintendents Reynaldo Berroya, Domingo Reyes and Danilo de la Cruz.

Filipino-Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry members led by their president Dante Go also attended the summit.

Media's role

Ang-See's watchdog group said yesterday the press must take some of the blame for a wave of kidnappings in the Philippines, alleging that excessive coverage was endangering the lives of victims.

"What scares victims (and the kidnappers too) most is seeing the news splashed all over the front pages of the newspaper," the CAAC said, citing the case of an elderly hostage and a boy who were murdered separately in the 1990s.

"The kidnappers admitted that they panicked when they saw the news reported in the papers," it said in a statement.

The monitor, led by members of the Chinese-Filipino community which is a prime target of kidnap gangs, took both the media and the police to task for leaking details of abduction cases and exposing victims to potential retribution.

"In most circumstances, the news is leaked from the police report. It contains the exact address of the victim, including the house number, street and district," the watchdog group said.

"Media must never tag the victim as a multi-millionaire, or even reveal the billions in assets of the victim—that can get victims killed and prolongs the negotiation," the statement said.

"Very often, the reports are quite inaccurate because assets may be fixed and liquidity at this time of crisis is difficult, even for the rich families."

Villar's proposal

The campaign to stop kidnapping and other crimes will not prosper so long as syndicates are backed by men in uniform, Sen. Manuel Villar said yesterday.

Villar said Ebdane should first put policemen and other law enforcers protecting and conniving with criminal syndicates behind bars.

"Let us hope that his anti-kidnap summit will have concrete results and not go the way of other past summits such as the garbage summit where results were sorely lacking," he said.

The few "bad eggs" that have connived with kidnap-for-ransom syndicates, he said, have unjustly tainted the name of the entire police organization.

"In fairness to the police force, there are only a few involved in such illicit activities," he said.

But Villar emphasized that it would be difficult for kidnap syndicates to flourish without protection from law enforcers.

To improve the peace and order situation, Villar urged his colleagues to approve several anti-crime bills pending in the Senate, including a bill to clamp down on organized crime and another to put in place a national crime database for the easy identification and arrest of criminals. ***With reports from Cynthia Balana, AP, Reuters, AFP***

Palace allots ₱300M for 'Gloria' victims

From page A1

The fatalities were from Malabon, Marikina, Valenzuela, Bataan, Pampanga, Olongapo, Batangas, Rizal, Romblon, Benguet, Cotabato, Negros Occidental and Iloilo.

The NDCC said 37 were injured and four were reported missing.

Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin said that of the P300 million, P100 million would go to the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD); P80 million to the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH); P60 million to the Office of the Civil Defense; and P60 million to the Department of National Defense.

Boncodin said that the President had directed government agencies to use their individual Quick Response Fund (QRF) if necessary.

"If it (QRF) is not sufficient, they need only to inform the Department of Budget and Management," Boncodin said.

More rains

Hambalos dumped more rain on the Luzon mainland and Western Visayas yesterday as Gloria continued to move toward Okinawa, Japan.

The eye of Gloria was located yesterday at 1,160 km east northeast of Basco, Batanes, or 490 km east southeast of Okinawa, while Hambalos was sighted over the South China 420 km east of Basco.

The weather bureau said Luzon and Western Visayas would continue to experience monsoon rains. The rest of the country will be cloudy with scattered rain showers and thunderstorms.

In Pampanga, where 133 villages were submerged in 2 to 4 feet of water, the President visited Guagua and Sasmuan towns to give food packs to some 1,000 families.

The packs consisted of a three-day supply of rice, canned meat loaf and sardines.

The floods in the two coastal towns affected almost 16,000 families or nearly 100,000 people, a report from the provincial disaster coordinating council said. At least 44,699 families or 222,318 persons have been affected by flood since Monday, the council said.

Wearing a brown waterproof jacket and blue rubber boots, the President rode an Army truck that snaked through the flooded route.

In Barangays San Juan and San Pablo in Guagua and Barangay San Nicolas 2 in Sasmuan, the President braved the strong rains and waded through waist-deep water.

In Sasmuan, hundreds of residents welcomed her with chants of "Gloria, Gloria." The President had lunch with flood victims in San Juan, Guagua, where floodwaters were 2 feet high.

On the way back, the Army truck carrying the President was hailed by a mother with a sick child. The President ordered the convoy to stop, took the one-year-old boy, who was convulsing, in her arms and entered a bakery. The President used the *pandesal* stand as a bed for the boy.

She called her personal doctor to give the child emergency treatment. When the boy, a son of a certain Gerry Tan, was revived, the President's party left.

In Bulacan, The PDCC said the number of flood-affected villages in the province rose to 124. Some 500 families in Marilao, Guiguinto, Meycauayan and Malolos evacuated to barangay halls and public schools have yet to return to their homes because they're flooded.

Not passable

In Tarlac, the PDCC said the Concepcion-Magalang road was not passable to all types of vehicles. The Romulo Highway was not passable to light vehicles.

La Paz Mayor Johnson Manuel said that 16 of the town's 21 barangays were flooded. "A section of an irrigation canal running all the way from Tarlac City was breached, pouring more water into La Paz," he said.

In Benguet, Kennon Road was opened to traffic yesterday morning but DPWH officials advised motorists not to use it due to heavy rains and fog. Motorists to and from Baguio may take Marcos Highway and Naguilian Road.

The Bokod–Kabayan Road and the Halsema Highway (Baguio-Bontoc Road) remained closed. Landslides were reported in four sections of the Itogon-Dalupirip Road.

Bugulas, Kabayan, Mankayan and Bakun towns have experienced power outages since Monday. Baguio City also experienced power outages on Tuesday.

Binga and Ambuklao dams

As heavy rains continued to pour in Benguet, flood control officials released water at about 4 a.m. Tuesday from the Binga Dam, and at 10 a.m. from the Ambuklao Dam, according to Perfecto Tamani, spokesperson for the National Power Corp. in North Luzon.

Benguet Gov. Raul Molintas complained that Napocor had given provincial officials only a five-hour notice before spilling water from the Binga Dam in Bokod. "They should give us a 24-hour notice," he said.

Emergency response personnel from the Philippine Navy, Coast Guard, Air Force, the Police Maritime Unit and the North Luzon Command based at Camp Aquino in Tarlac were put on red alert yesterday in anticipation of bigger floods after the release of water from the dams.

They were particularly monitoring flooding situation in Pangasinan, according to Nigel Lontoc, director of the regional Office of Civil Defense.

Lontoc said water released from Binga and Ambuklao dams reached the Agno River by 2 p.m. yesterday. Critical areas being monitored in case of an overflow were San Nicolas, San Manuel, Tayug, Rosales (particularly the Carmen Bridge), Sta. Barbara and Calasiao towns and Dagupan and San Carlos cities.

In Pangasinan, at least 13 towns and cities were flooded although major roads in the province remained passable.

Gov. Victor Agbayani identified them as Labrador, Bani, San Jacinto, San Fabian, Mangatarem, Sta. Barbara, Alaminos City, Urdaneta City, Alcala, Sta. Maria, Villasis, Umingan and Pozorrubio.

In La Union, 54 barangays in San Fernando City and Agoo, Naguilian, Sto. Tomas, Caba, San Juan, Tubao, Rosario, Bauang, and Aringay towns were flooded, although only 245 families, mostly from San Fernando City, Aringay and Caba, were evacuated to safer grounds.

In the Camanava area (Caloocan-Malabon-Navotas-Valenzuela), the number of persons killed rose to five yesterday. The latest fatality was identified as Edwin Lalu, 24, of M.H. del Pilar Street, Barangay Mabolo, Valenzuela City.

Lalu was found by his relatives in the chest-deep floodwater that swamped their two-story house at around 6:30 a.m. on Monday, according to Insp. Salvador de la Cruz.

Floodwaters in most barangays in District 1 of Valenzuela City such as Polo, Coloong, Dalandanan, Malanday, P. Villa, Palasan, Arkong Bato and Isla have started to recede, prompting 400 families to return to their homes.

In Malabon City, 18 barangays were still submerged in floodwater. More than 500 families were staying at different evacuation centers as of 1 p.m. yesterday.

In Libungan, Cotabato, four people drowned while crossing a swollen Libungan River on Sunday.

The victims were identified as Clinton Gelacio, 20; Biboy Lobreque, 19; Barbara Quentero, 30; and a still unidentified man.

Radio reports said about 15 people tried to cross the swollen river by forming a human chain. The chain, however, broke. The fatalities did not know how to swim, according to reports. ***With reports from Martin P. Marfil and Tina Santos in Manila; Mei Magsino, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau; Tonette Orejas, Carmela Reyes and Russell Arador PDI Central Luzon Desk, and Frank Cimatu, Vincent Cabreza, Yolanda Fuertes, and Gia Damaso-Dumo, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau; Edwin O. Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

Despite damage, Agri chief hails rains

By Gerald G. Lacuarta and Christine Gaylican

DESPITE the damage wrought by Typhoon "Gloria" and tropical depression "Hambalos," Agriculture Secretary Leonardo Montemayor welcomed the coming of monsoon rains.

"The general picture is favorable to agriculture. We have been waiting for this (rain)," Montemayor said.

Initial estimates from the Department of Agriculture placed the damage to fishery and farm products at P94 million.

A total of 28,180 hectares of farmlands and fishponds were affected, according to reports from the Department of Agriculture's regional offices.

Some 20,000 hectares of land planted with *palay* (unmilled rice) suffered the most damage, estimated at P40.5 million.

The damage in Central Visayas was estimated at P3.7 million. In Mindoro Oriental, rice farms were submerged in floodwaters after a portion of a dike collapsed.

Provinces hard hit by flooding include Ilocos Sur, La Union, Pangasinan, Bataan, Nueva Ecija, Tarlac, Batangas, Laguna, Cavite, Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat and Maguindanao.

The DA said the extent of the damage could still go up.

"All regional directors should be on alert for a bigger impact of Typhoon Hambalos as it is reportedly getting stronger," Montemayor said.

Despite the heavy rains, farmlands could recover, according to Montemayor.

"Although there were certain areas put underwater, those farms could still recover if the water recedes in three days," the agriculture secretary said.

Montemayor described as "a blessing in disguise" the delay in the planting of crops this season.

He said about half of the entire rice fields in the country had been planted until the latter part of June.

"And now with the rains, the farmers could already start planting the rest," he said.

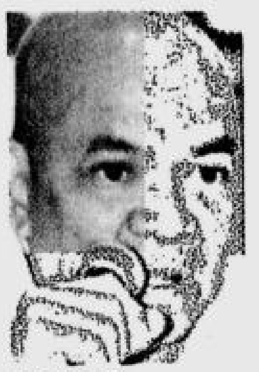
The Philippines may acquire additional rice imports from abroad if crop damage is extensive and severe.

The National Food Authority said there was a possibility that the country would import more rice this year if typhoons damaged more than 100,000 metric tons of *palay*.

The country expects 692,000 metric tons of imported rice until August, which may cost between P3 billion and P4 billion.

PHILRACOM REPORT

Record ₱3.2-B race sales posted



SANCHEZ

DILAG

TOTAL horse racing sales for the first half of the year reached a whooping P3.25 billion, this was announced yesterday by the Philippine Racing Commission (Philracom).

The racing body, composed of chair Andrew Sanchez and commissioners Jimmy Dilag, Vergel Cruz, Lyndon Guce, Roger Tandiama, Felizardo Sevilla Jr. and Francis Trillana, said renewed public interest in the sport contributed greatly in the sales increase.

Marking their first year in office, the board said the P3.25 billion sales was an impressive 18.25 per cent increase compared to last year's output.

"It is a clear indication of the public's continuing support of the industry's programs which the Philracom, in cooperation with the various racing sectors, implemented over the past year," the board announced during yesterday's PSA Sports Forum at the Holiday Inn Manila Pavilion Hotel.

The mid-year earnings also gifted the national government a total of P487.82 million in direct taxes, a significant 18.72% growth or an actual increase of P76.9 million compared to the amount of betting duties collected by the government for the same period last year.

Among the promotional programs spearheaded by the Philracom over the past year include the regular sponsorship of major stakes and special condition races, the holding of career enhancement seminars for race stewards, farriers, starting gate helpers and stablehand by invited foreign racing experts.

The racing body also held a multisectoral symposium to combat the spread of an equine disease (surra), the creation of special committees to address various racing concerns like handicapping, race officiating and track safety, development of collaborative linkages with other gaming industry players like the PCSO and the Pagcor, principally for the sponsorship of promotional racing events, publication of the revised horse racing rule book and racing calendar, approval of the five-day racing week schedule, prompt disposition of race-related controversies and the holding of the annual Fair and Square Awards.

The Metropolitan Association of Race Horse Owners (Marho) led by Putch Puyat (president) and Sandy Javier (chair), Philippine Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Organization, New Philippine Jockeys Association, Race Horse Trainers Association and the grooms' association were also lauded by the Philracom board for their continuous support of the racing body's year-long programs.

Edwin Villanueva

'Fight for a Cause' derby set today

METRO Manila's cockfight afficionados are expected to troop back to the Las Pinas Cockpit to avail of LPC's special offer in today's Fight for a Cause 3-Cock Derby—a P100 entrance fee.

More than 58 exciting fights are lined up beginning at 7 p.m.

With the entrance fee lowered, LPC manager Alex Tobias said that everybody, including the cockpit owner, is required to buy entrance tickets.

"This system will benefit longtime paying patrons who had been paying expensive entrance tickets before," Tobias stated.

Entry fee is P3,300 while cash prize at stake is P200,000.

Every participants will receive the following bonanza: three t-shirts, product giveaways of Thunderbird Power feeds, P2,000 casino chips from CF-Parañaque, one case of San Miguel Beer and *pulutan*. Paying patrons will get P200 worth of casino chips.

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San Isidro Village
Batangas City, Batangas
San Antonio Heights
Sto. Tomas, Batangas
TEX 48
48 sqm
Prices start at ₱1.1M
San Isidro Village
Batangas City, Batangas
San Antonio Heights
Sto. Tomas, Batangas
TEX 40
40 sqm
Prices start at ₱1.6M
St. Gabriel Heights
Antipolo City
TEX 77
77 sqm
Prices start at ₱1.5M
San Isidro Village
Batangas City, Batangas
San Antonio Heights
Sto. Tomas, Batangas
TEX 49
49 sqm
Prices start at ₱1.7M
St. Gabriel Heights
Antipolo City
DOMINICA
90-110 sqm
Prices start at ₱2.8M
Sta. Rosa Estates II
Sta. Rosa, Laguna
St. Alexandra Estates
Antipolo City
ANTIGUA
110-135 sqm
Prices start at ₱3.4M
Sta. Rosa Estates II
Sta. Rosa, Laguna
St. Alexandra Estates
Antipolo City
CONCORDE
159 sqm
Prices start at ₱3.2M
Sta. Rosa Estates I
Sta. Rosa, Laguna
TEX 81
81 sqm
Prices start at ₱2.1M
St. Gabriel Heights
Antipolo City
RIVOLI
159 sqm
Prices start at ₱3.9M
Sta. Rosa Estates I
Sta. Rosa, Laguna
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Prices start at ₱4.3M
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CONCERT TOUR

PSC revs up Asian Games drive

By Marc
Anthony Reyes

BUHAIN

THE PHILIPPINE Sports Commission yesterday announced that it will go full-blast on its fund drive for the Asian Games-bound athletes with a slated provincial concert tour featuring movie and television personalities.

PSC chair Eric Buhain said the idea is not only to generate funds to help bankroll the country's campaign in the Busan Asiad, but also to instill awareness among the people, especially in the provinces.

"We want to turn on the excitement among the people and get them involved in supporting the national athletes," said Buhain. "This is what we mean by getting people into sports."

He added that getting the public involved in sports development is the key in attracting corporate sponsors, which is vital in running the PSC which supports no less than 800 athletes. For the Asian Games alone, the country will send around 200 athletes, who are now undergoing training either here or abroad.

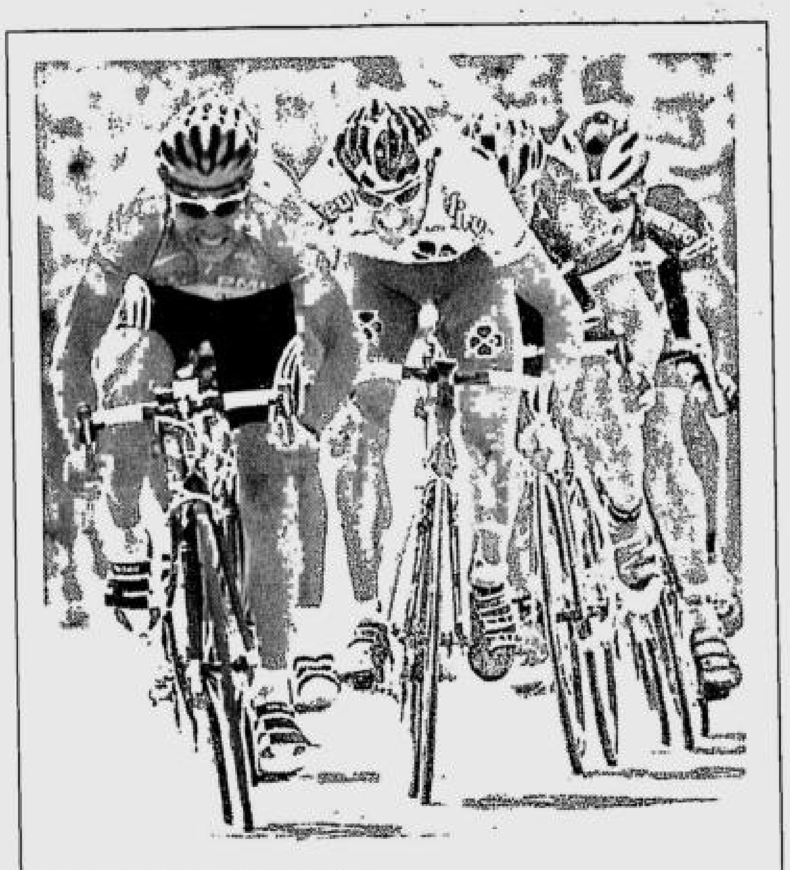
Buhain has also asked the help of top collegiate leagues like the UAAP and he NCAA to assist in promoting the fund-raising project during their games. He added that students of the UAAP- and NCAA-member schools will get 10 percent discount on tickets.

The tour, according to project chief Arsenic Lacson, will be held in key cities in the country and will start with a welcome concert for the national delegation coming from Busan Asiad in October.

The celebrity hoopla will begin with the Aug. 9 concert at the Philsports arena dubbed as "Alay sa Gintong Medalya." Tickets are available at all SM TicketNet outlets for P800, P600, P350 and P100.

Marketing outfit Astetik was tasked to sell the tickets with discounts to corporate firms. Sponsoring the event are Pagcor, Samsung Electronics, Centrum Vitamins, Air Philippines, WG&A Super Ferry, Philtranco, Brunswick-Bong Coo Sports, Peak Sports and Bank of Commerce.

Gary Valenciano will lead the star-studded concert which will also highlight bands like South Border, True Faith and Parokya ni Edgar. The national athletes' theme song for the Busan Asiad, Saan Ka Man Lumaban, will also be performed during the Aug. 9 spectacle.



SPRINT TO THE FINISH

Erik Zabel of Germany (left) outsprints Baden Cooke of Australia to grab third place in the second stage of the Tour de France between Luxembourg and Saarbruecken, Germany, Monday. Osarac Freire of Spain (unseen) won the stage. Defending champion Lance Armstrong landed 61st and slipped to fourth place overall. Switzerland's Rubens Bertogliati kept the yellow jersey.

AP

Mike gets boost

VETERAN MP Turbo race driver Mike Potenciano got a major boost when San Miguel Beer backed his participation in the Asian Formula 2000 Championship of the Asian Festival of Speed.

"This is a very big help to our AF2000 campaign," said Potenciano, a revered son of San Pablo City. "We are proud to have the suppport of the San Miguel Corporation. We will do our best to make it in the championship."

The new Zed-San Miguel Beer-MP Turbo Team Philippines is currently in second place in both the drivers and the team standings.

With eight rounds to go in four countries around southeast Asia, the team is preparing hard for the Sepang, Malaysian rounds slated on July 21.

"Our goal is again to finish in the top 3," added Potenciano.

Denis Lian from Singapore, winner of the inaugural race held in Subic in April, and Indonesia's Meckel Ali, Johor's champion, are the top two contenders.

Underdog squad rules Davao 3 on 3 leg

DAVAO CITY—Emar Learning Center completed its amazing run from underdog to champion of the Nike 3 on 3 Davao leg following an 11-8 finals victory over Agro High School at the Entertainment Center of the SM City-Davao here last Saturday.

The trio of Winthrop Mangulabnan, Tommy Boy Medrano and Jovie Jimenez fueled ELC to a commanding 5-1 lead before fourth man Marvin Corpuz came through with a game-winning late burst when Agro threatened at 4-6.

An underdog throughout the games, ELC stunned Davao Christina High School in the semifinals to arrange a championship duel with AHS, which crushed Holy Child School of Davao in the other semis contest.

"I told the boys to focus on defense and not to be rattled by the pressure, and we can win the championship," said ELC coach Erlito Urdaneta.

ELC will join Cagayan de Oro champion Sacred Heart of Jesus Montessori School Bacolod qualifier University of ST. La Salle and Cebu leg titlist Uiversity of Cebu in the National Finals to be held in Manila in August.

In preparation for the Metro Manila elims of the Nike 3 on 3—the longest running and most prestigious high school basketball tournament of its kind—tournament director Tanny Gonzalez will be holding a Nike Coaches Workshop on Thursday, July 11, at the Kalayaan 1 Function Room of the Club Filipino in San Juan.

PSC duty bound to cut cost

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

PHILIPPINE Sports Commission chair Eric Buhain and his commissioners should heed the call of Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin to cut down on their costs of operations; including travel, because the government is broke.

Recently, Boncodin said the government's budget deficit rose to P107.54 billion during the first five months of the year, 84 percent bigger than the five-month deficit in 2001 and already accounts for 83 percent of the P130-billion budget deficit target for the whole year of 2002. Therefore, Buhain and Co.—if they truly love their country—should not add to the expenses of this cash-strapped government by just staying home and not attending IOC-recognized events like the coming Asian Games in Busan, Korea, where the PSC has no personality whatsoever. They are duty bound to save public funds by not joining the national delegation to the Asiad this September.

Since its creation in 1993, PSC and government expenses have doubled because PSC officials and personnel, including (family members?),. team kibitzers, even senators and congressmen always get slots in the national delegations, travelling a lot using taxpayers' money. This is one big reason why Philippine sports is not improving. Unlike their counterparts in the region, Filipino sports officials lack strong personal discipline and treat international sporting meets as fiestas, a season for junket and an opportunity to go shopping and sight-seeing.

The PSC's main task is to promote sports at the grassroots, not to join trips abroad. People no longer buy the pitch that PSC officials join international competitions with the lame excuse to find out if the NSAs (national sports associations) are spending PSC funds correctly, stressing the PSC can always check how its money was spent in international jaunts (without its officials leaving the country) by simply requiring the concerned NSA to render an accounting of its expenses upon its arrival.

And while on the subject of foreign trips, it is on record that a former PSC commissioner had the most number of international trips among PSC personnel, spending—would you believe—more than P766,000 for his travels in just two years' time. From 1996 to 1997, this same commissioner visited at taxpayers' expense places such as Atlanta, Georgia (Centennial Olympic Games); Naples, Italy (Italia Boxing Tournament); Cuba (Balado Boxing Cup); Hong Kong (Sports Meeting in the 21st Century); Wembley, London (Wimbledon tennis championships); and the US Tennis Open in New York. Join the PSC and see the world?

BLAST FROM THE PAST

TODAY in 1992, Jerry Nodado beat Enrique Paciencia in 34 moves of a King's Indian defense to clinch the June-July edition of the MCC non-masters chess tournament at the Harris Memorial College. Also today in 1992, Elvis Perez defeated Felimon de Leon, 7-5, to bag the title of the 1992 Gold Eagle Beer 9-Ball Billiards Classic in Caloocan City.

SPORTS ON TV

Compiled by Lorenzo Manguiat

BASEBALL: MLB All Star Game 2002 at 8 a.m. (r – 8:30 p.m.) on ESPN

This Week in Baseball at 1:30 p.m. (r – 6 p.m.) on ESPN

TENNIS: ATP World Team Championship 2002 at 10 a.m. (r) on Star Sports

Wimbledon Lawn Tennis Championships - Day 13, Men's Singles Final & Ladies Doubles Final at 8 p.m. (r) on Star Sports

GOLF: McDonald's LPGA Championship, Final Round at 8 a.m. on Star Sports

PGA Advil Western Open, Third Round at 2 p.m. (r) on Star Sports

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SPORTS

Editor **Al S. Mendoza** ● *Assistant Editor* **Edwin M. Villanueva**

PBA CUP

Coca-Cola drubs Purefoods, 91-72

GAME TOMORROW
(Cuneta Astrodome)
7 p.m.—Red Bull vs San Miguel

By June Navarro

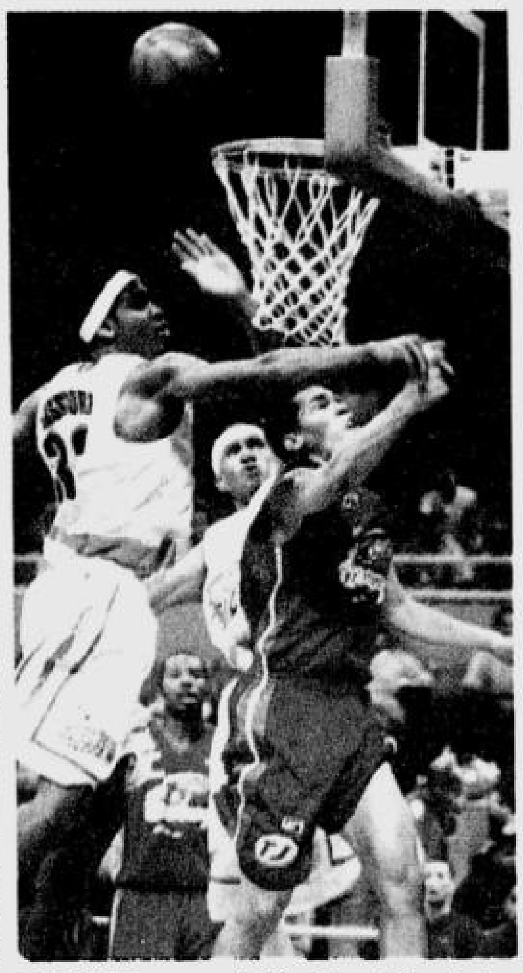
COCA-COLA whipped up a storm of its own last night, tearing down Purefoods, 91-72, to claim the lead in the PBA Samsung Commissioner's Cup at the Cuneta Astrodome.

Bryant Basemore, Freddie Abuda, Johnny Abarrientos and Poch Juinio formed the eye of Coca-Cola's typhoon as they punished the Hotdogs with accurate shooting inside-out en route to their fourth victory in five games.

Ron Hale, the Tigers' take-charge guy, rode the bench for most of the second half as he was saddled by fouls. But that didn't stop the rest of the Coca-Cola entourage from pounding the Hotdogs with a consolidated offensive effort.

"This is a test for us, we came out strong and hopefully we can beat the other big teams in our succeeding games," said Coca-Cola coach Chot Reyes, whose wards got shell-shocked by the towering San Miguel Beermen, 85-73, more than a week ago.

"Our objective is to beat the big teams in the league and as long as we come out fighting our mismatch in terms of size wouldn't matter," he added.



BRYANT Basemore (left) of Coca-Cola rejects a shot by Rey Evangelista. JESS YUSON

Abarrientos, who seemed to rediscover his old self, gallantly battled the Hotdogs with his sharp moves in delivering the stuff for the Tigers.

The 1996 MVP finished with 11 points, five rebounds, two steals and two assists.

Abuda again showed his forte in stopping Kelvin Price but it was Juinio's triple with four minutes remaining that pushed the Tigers to their biggest margin, 82-61, before going into cruise control the rest of the way.

The Hotdogs missed the old Price who helped them to the Governor's Cup crown last conference as Gabe Muoneke singlehandedly tried but failed to stop his team from suffering its third straight defeat for a 1-4 record.

"It was really a team effort because everyone I pulled from the bench did his share," said Reyes.

Scores:

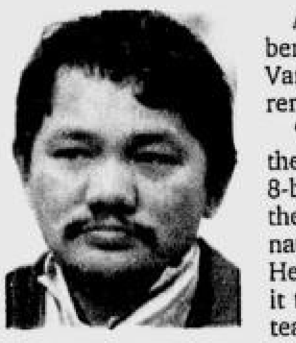
COCA-COLA 91—Hale 27, Basemore 19, Abarrientos 11, Abuda 10, Avenido 9, Juinio 5, Reavis 4, Ballesteros 3, Morano 3, Misolas 0.

PUREFOODS 72—Muoneke 19, Price 14, Raymundo 10, Yap 10, Evangelista 8, Magsanoc 6, Patrinonio 3, Victoria 2, Escobar 0.

Quarters: 27-23; 56-46; 75-59; 91-72.

Bata laments Django's exclusion from RP team

By Dennis U. Eroa



REYES

FORMER world nine-ball champion Efren "Bata" Reyes yesterday said the refusal of the Snooker and Billiards Congress of the Philippines to include Francisco "Django" Bustamante in the Asiad-bound team will hurt the country's gold-medal drive.

Reyes also expressed surprise on the decision of the snooker and billiards association to field him in the eight-ball and not in his favorite nine-ball event in the quadrennial event to be held in Busan starting in September.

" I don't know what happened. I'm more comfortable in the nine-ball event," said Reyes in yesterday's PSA Forum at the Holiday Inn. Also guesting in the forum was Reyes' manager Rolly Vicente.

Reyes recalled that he even asked the PSC for help regarding Django's case but was prevailed upon by local billiards officials, who said it would be unfair to the rest of the team who've been practicing together for more than a year.

Aside from Reyes, other members of the national team are Lee Van Cortez, Antonio Lining, Warren Kiamco and Leonardo Andam.

"If Django's around, we will have the edge in pocket billiards (9-ball, 8-ball, 9-ball doubles). Django has the composure to win big in international competitions," Reyes said. He said that Django may still make it to Busan if somebody from the team will relinquish his slot.

Vicente was more straight to the point. "Our opponents shriver when they see Django. I also can't understand the decision to leave Efren out of nine-ball."

Aside from the eight-ball, Reyes said he will also compete in the "carambola," one of his least favorite events. "*Baka sa kangkukan tayo pulutin*," Reyes said.

The Germany-based Bustamante needed to get the nod of his sponsors in order to express his intention to wear the country colors. He recently won the Motolite nine-ball international challenge which featured the world's leading pool sharks at the Araneta Coliseum.

Bataan-A wins chessfest

SAN FERNANDO, Pampanga—It was Rogelio Antonio and Bataan-A's turn to shine as they upended Eugene Torre and Basilan, 2-0, in the final round yesterday to claim the 2002 Inter-Provincial Chess Championship crown at the Robinson's Starmills here.

Antonio beat fellow GM Torre as Bataan A whipped Basilan, 3-1, in the first match before coasting to a draw in the second match which Bataan A also won, 2.5-1.5.

Bataan A thus exacted revenge over Basilan, which topped last year's edition while carrying Mt. Province's colors, and won the P200,000 top purse. Basilan settled for second and the P100,000 that goes with it.

"At least *nakabawi na rin kami kina* Eugene (Torre)," said Antonio, who thanked Bataan Gov. Ding Roman and San Jose Builder's top honcho Jerry Acuzar for supporting the team in the tournament organized by the National Chess Federation of the Philippines.

The 39-year-old Antonio was threatening mate when Torre, 50, resigned. Fide Master Fernie Donguines and Edmundo Gatus provided Bataan's other victories, which cushioned Melvin Merelos' loss to Rex Ami in Board 3.

In the second match, Gatus repeated over Macapagal Paguitan in Board 4 while Donguines and Merelos were able to halve the point with NM Rolando Nolte and Ami, respectively.

Roy Luarca

Japan lifts ban on Pinoy boxers

FILIPINO boxers can fight in Japan again. This developed after the Japan Boxing Commission lifted the ban it imposed on Filipino boxers effective this month.

Shigeru Kojima, JBC executive secretary, relayed the message to Games and Amusement Board Chair Eduardo Villanueva yesterday.

For two years, Filipino boxers were not allowed to participate in boxing promotions in Japan except for championship bouts due to rampant incidents of overstaying.

Emmanuel Palabrica, GAB commissioner and officer-in-charge faxed a copy of the report to the INQUIRER.

Roy Luarca

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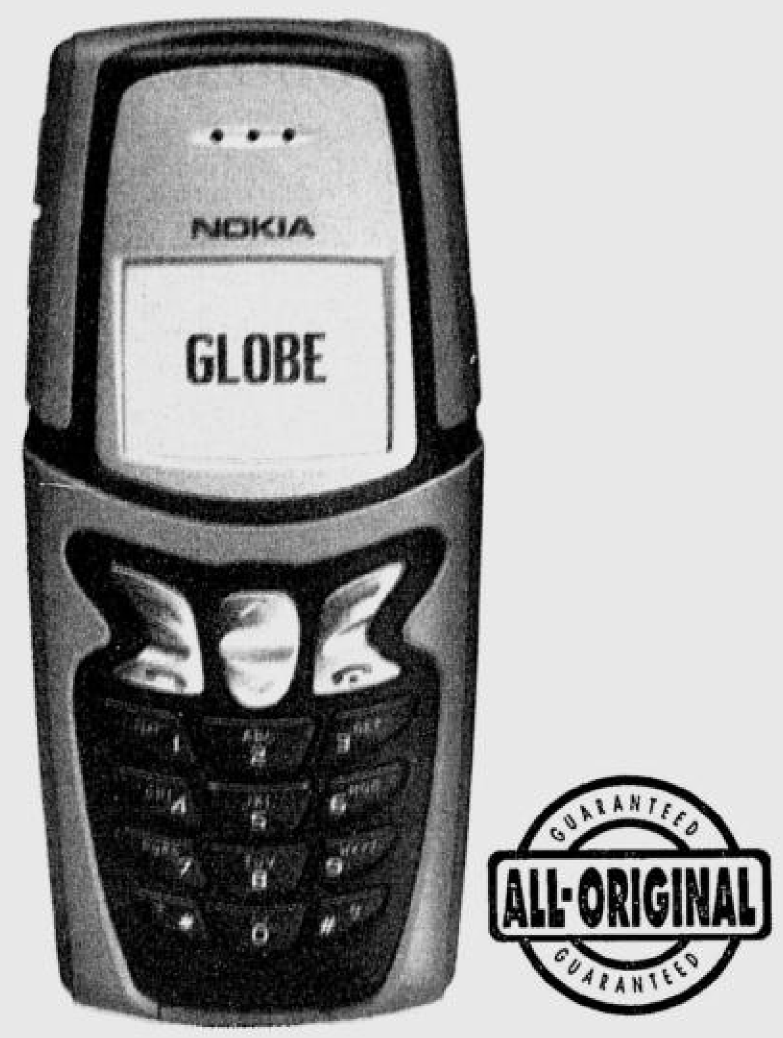

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- **Flood control turnover: Agencies say yes, congressmen say no** /A24
- **Ex-ally sues Atienza over 'onerous' contract** /A24

METRO

Editor Louie C. Camino

- **Bare Eye: This national treasure deserves more than gold dust** /A24

MMDA to field 'parking enforcers'

By Leila Salaverria

TO MAKE sure that its plan to clear the sidewalks of obstructions will be carried out to the letter, the Metro Manila Development Authority plans to deploy "special parking enforcers."

During a news conference on Monday, MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando voiced out his proposal to organize a group that would ensure that people would be parking in designated areas.

He said the MMDA would field "as many as we can."

"As much as possible, we will get them from the MMDA," he said of the parking enforcers. He said they would be equipped with vehicles for greater mobility.

Fernando also told reporters on Monday that the MMDA would properly indicate the places that motorists could use to park their vehicles.

"We will prepare signs to identify parking and no-parking spaces," he said.

MMDA TO FIELD/ A24

$2.5-trillion fake T-bills seized in Parañaque

By Philip C. Tubeza

NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation agents seized an estimated $2.5 trillion fake United States treasury bills in Parañaque City last week, the bureau's biggest haul to date.

Acting NBI director Fermin Nasol said 33 boxes of fake US T-bills were seized from a warehouse on Quirino Avenue last Friday. Of the 33 boxes, 21 contained 4,494 fake notes with a value of $500 million each.

The other 12 boxes had 2,780 treasury bills, each worth $100 million, the NBI said.

Their total value was $2.525 trillion.

NBI Assistant Regional Director Vicente de Guzman III, NBI Special Ac-

$2.5-TRILLION/ A24

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FLOOD CONTROL TURNOVER

Agencies say yes, congressmen say no

THE METROPOLITAN Manila Development Authority can do a better job of addressing the flood problem if it is given the flood control functions of the Department of Public Works and Highways, according to officials of the DPWH and the environment department as well as local officials.

But some congressmen don't think so and they have asked President Macapagal-Arroyo to reconsider her plan to transfer the DPWH's flood control functions to MMDA.

Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez welcomed the planned turnover but at the same time he said solving Metro Manila's flood problem would have to involve its citizens.

MMDA and DPWH officials met yesterday to discuss how they could solve the Metro Manila floods. Proposals include the transfer to the MMDA of equipment and at least 2,000 public works employees involved in the flood control system.

DPWH-National Capital Region director Tonio Sta. Elena said the agency has done what it could, but flooding continues to be a problem in Metro Manila because of the related problems of garbage and squatters, over which the MMDA has control.

"MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando can look at it from an integrated view because he handles the problems of Metro Manila—garbage, traffic, flooding," Sta. Elena said. "And I think he has the political will to do what he wants to be done."

He said the memorandum of agreement between the MMDA and DPWH on the transfer of functions is "under preparation" and the top officials of DPWH are already working out the terms of the agreement.

Mayors, particularly in the Camanava (Caloocan-Malabon-Navotas-Valenzuela) area, vowed to support the transfer.

"We, the local chief executives, of course would know the problems in our jurisdiction," said Malabon City Mayor Amado Vicencio.

Caloocan Mayor Rey Malonzo said the MMDA should be given ample time to address the problem, but he added that "the people should be blamed and made responsible for the worsening flood problem."

Navotas Mayor Toby Tiangco and Valenzuela City Mayor Jose Emmanuel Carlos were also in favor of the transfer.

But Caloocan City District 1 Rep. Edgar Erice said, "Not this year. The MMDA lacks flood control experts. And it should be given the necessary funding and equipment first."

Malabon-Navotas Rep. Ricky Sandoval said: "It's a complicated issue. It should be studied first very carefully."

Valenzuela District II Rep. Magi Gunigundo said that instead of shifting functions, the MMDA should work hand in hand with the DPWH.

Gunigundo led other congressmen in asking the President to reconsider the turnover plan, in an open letter he wrote to her dated July 8.

Gunigundo, a member of Lakas-NUCD, yesterday said his letter has the support of 26 congressmen belonging to the National Capital Region bloc in the House.

He told the President that it would be "ill-advised" to entrust the flood control task to the MMDA "simply because the new chairman comes from Marikina."

Fernando brushed this aside. "Everyone has the right to have apprehensions because that is a major policy decision," he said. "But (flood control) is part of the MMDA mandate."

He said that when the MMDA was created in 1995, one of its functions was flood control.

He said the transfer of flood-control personnel would have to wait until after July 30 because of the Commission on Elections ban on the movement of government workers. "So you can blame me (about the flood situation) by Aug. 1," he said with a laugh. ***Blanche S. Rivera, Gerald G. Lacuarta, Christine Avendaño, Leila Salaverria, Tina Santos***

METROBRIEFS

New death in old jail

MANILA City Jail inmate Rey de la Cruz, 36, died on Monday, following the death of Leonardo S. Aranches, 43, on Saturday. De la Cruz died of gastrointestinal bleeding, while Aranches died after complaining of chest pains, jail authorities said. Both died at the Jose R. Reyes Memorial Medical Center where they were being treated. The death toll in the congested and disease-laden jail has risen to more than 30 since last January, authorities said. ***Philip C. Tubeza***

'Salvage' in QC overpass

AN UNIDENTIFIED man was found dead with a bullet wound in the head on top of the Tandang Sora overpass on Commonwealth Avenue in Quezon City on Monday, and policemen believe the killers were vigilantes. Policemen described the victim as 24 to 27 years old, 5-foot-3 tall, brown-complexioned, and wearing a brown shirt and denim shorts. Traffic enforcer Purificacion Par, 41, told police that three women informed her that the body was on the flyover. Police said several ID cards were found on the body, none of which belonged to the dead man. The IDs were in the name of Sigfried Vasquez of the Asian Institute of Maritime Studies, security guard Jaime Gijal, and Eric Azumaya. Authorities said the victim might have been a holdup man killed by vigilantes. ***Alcuin Papa***

Gay rob in Makati

ARAB engineer Sallem Alburj lost his cell phone on Sunday to a gay prostitute that he first thought was a woman, policemen said. Alburj, a resident of Gilarmi Apartments on Ayala Avenue in Makati, told police he was walking in front of the Manila Peninsula Hotel when the suspect, who identified himself as Wendy, approached him and asked to borrow his Nokia 6210 cell phone. He said he thought it was a woman so he agreed to lend his cell phone. But the "woman" ran off with the cell phone and hailed a taxi, Alburj said. Witness Danilo Valdez, also known as Diane, told policemen he knew the suspect, whom police are now hunting down. ***Leila Salaverria***

Abduction, rape in Taguig

TAGUIG policemen arrested repairman Norberto Culimbres on Monday after a 15-year-old girl accused him of raping her for a week. The girl said Culimbres had snatched her on Magsalin Street on July 1 when she was on her way to school. She said he promised to treat her at a nearby restaurant but brought her instead to different places where he raped her. Policemen caught Culimbres in his place of work in Quezon City, but he denied raping the girl and claimed she went with him voluntarily. Medical reports, however, showed that the girl had been raped, police said. ***Christian V. Esguerra***

Ex-ally sues Atienza over 'onerous' contract

By Jerome Aning

MANILA Mayor Lito Atienza is facing graft charges after a former councilor and political ally filed a complaint against him before the Office of the Ombudsman last week.

In his complaint dated June 29, former sixth district Councilor Pablo "Chiqui" Ocampo IV accused Atienza of entering into an "onerous" contract with Mercury Drug Corp.

Ocampo also accused Emmanuel Sison, the mayor's secretary, of violating the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act.

Atienza called the case politically motivated.

When Ocampo was still a councilor, he and Atienza were close friends. They reportedly became estranged when Ocampo supported former Mayor Alfredo Lim, whom Atienza beat in the 2001 polls.

Ocampo said that on June 18, 1999, the city and Mercury Drug forged a contract for the firm to supply and deliver medicine and other drug requirements to the city-run Ospital ng Maynila (OsMa). Mercury was also allowed to put up and operate a dispensing unit within hospital premises, even if OsMa has its own pharmacy.

Ocampo said the Commission on Audit reviewed the contracts of local government units in Metro Manila in 2000 and 2001 and cited Atienza's contract with Mercury as among those found to be "disadvantageous."

Quoting the final report of the COA team, Ocampo said the contract "was disadvantageous to the city in terms of space, water and electricity, which the city provided for free."

The report said the renewal of the contract on June 19, 2000 and April 30, 2001 was "not justified in the absence of proof" that a study has been conducted by the City showing the advantages of allowing a Mercury store to operate beside a hospital pharmacy.

The 57-page report was prepared by members of COA's Manila city audit team: Remegio Arzadon, Cecilia Ancheta, Mercy Caliguia, Ma. Cecilia Alonzo, Juantio Velasquez and Primitivo Baluyot.

Ocampo originally filed the case on May 8, 2001, a few days before the mayoral elections. It was based on the finding of the local government auditor. He filed his amended complaint Monday last week and urged Ombudsman Aniano Desierto to resolve it soon.

This national treasure deserves more than gold dust

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

IF there's a Filipino athlete who needs utmost protection now, it's boxer Manny Pacquiao.

This was the advice of international matchmaker Jun Sarreal, president of the Philippine Boxing Federation, who said Pacquiao should be protected from all the lusting wolves in the world prizefight market.

Well, we all know that Pacquiao is now a national treasure. It's hard to determine his true weight in gold but he definitely has become very expensive merchandise.

He was offered a lucrative three-year contract by American promoter Lou DiBella. There were also reports that Don King has sent feelers to Pacquiao's handlers.

Murad Muhammad, the promoter who gave Pacquiao the break that catapulted him to world stardom last year, is doing everything to keep his hold on the stone-fisted Pinoy sensation.

* * *

You see, we thought Pacquiao would shake his head in dismay after DiBella gruffly withdrew his tantalizing offer.

But Pacquiao just laughed off the botched deal.

He told my *kumpadre* Fred Lumba of Malaya that he expected better and more numerous offers: *"Walang problema, marami pang darating."*

In fact, there was instant celebration in the Pacquiao camp after the ploy to fax the DiBella offer to Murad paid off.

DiBella had offered Pacquiao $200,000 per fight in the first year, $400,000 each outing in the second, and $600,000 per bout in the third, excluding a signing fee and a bonus that could total another $100,000.

Upon learning of the fat offer, Murad wasted no time and sweetened the pot, so to say.

"Murad offered Pacquiao over $2.6 million for two and a half years and agreed to take only 20 percent fee as against the 33 ½ percent which DiBella had inserted in his proposal," the Manila Standard reported yesterday.

* * *

Pacquiao, indeed, has become hot property. This is readily confirmed by the international enthusiasm he has been drawing.

Anyway, not many fans seem to realize that Pacquiao doesn't get all the mind-boggling sums stated in his contract.

In fact, he would be lucky to get even half of the hefty purses.

Reason—for those who don't fully understand prizefighting—is that the purse is normally divided among the business manager, the manager, the trainer/s, the matchmaker, a few other kibitzers and the boxer himself.

At times, a boxer would be lucky to end up with only 40 percent of the total sum.

At least, in the case of Pacquiao, it's comforting to note that he is being advised in his international dealings by lawyer Rudy Salud, founding sec-gen of the WBC.

Salud has reportedly found the Murad proposal better than the one dangled by DiBella.

* * *

With Salud there, Pacquiao can be expected to play his cards sharply and well.

Anyway, for a review, Pacquiao had threatened to sever ties with Murad after he was paid a measly $70,000 in his last fight under the Lennox Lewis-Mike Tyson card in Memphis.

Pacquiao claimed he was officially apprised of the prize money only after he had weighed in.

Boxing experts around continued to wonder why the purse was drastically reduced when, in fact, Pacquiao had received $120,000 for his previous fight against the rugged Agapito Sanchez.

"That was too small for a championship purse because Gerry Peñalosa used to be paid no less than $80,000 as a challenger," said Jun Sarreal.

Did somebody tinker with the decimals in Pacquiao's last contract?

We can never tell. But Pacquiao might have to be congratulated for not allowing himself to be blinded by the staggering DiBella offer.

This was the suggestion of Fred Lumba who had heard that "under the DiBella offer, the American promoter and lawyer Sydney Hall wanted to take 30 percent each, and this did not include the seven percent of his business manager, another seven percent of his manager proper, Marty Elorde," which in the end could have left the poor Gensan kayo artist only 28 percent of the original purse.

A national treasure deserves more than just gold dust.

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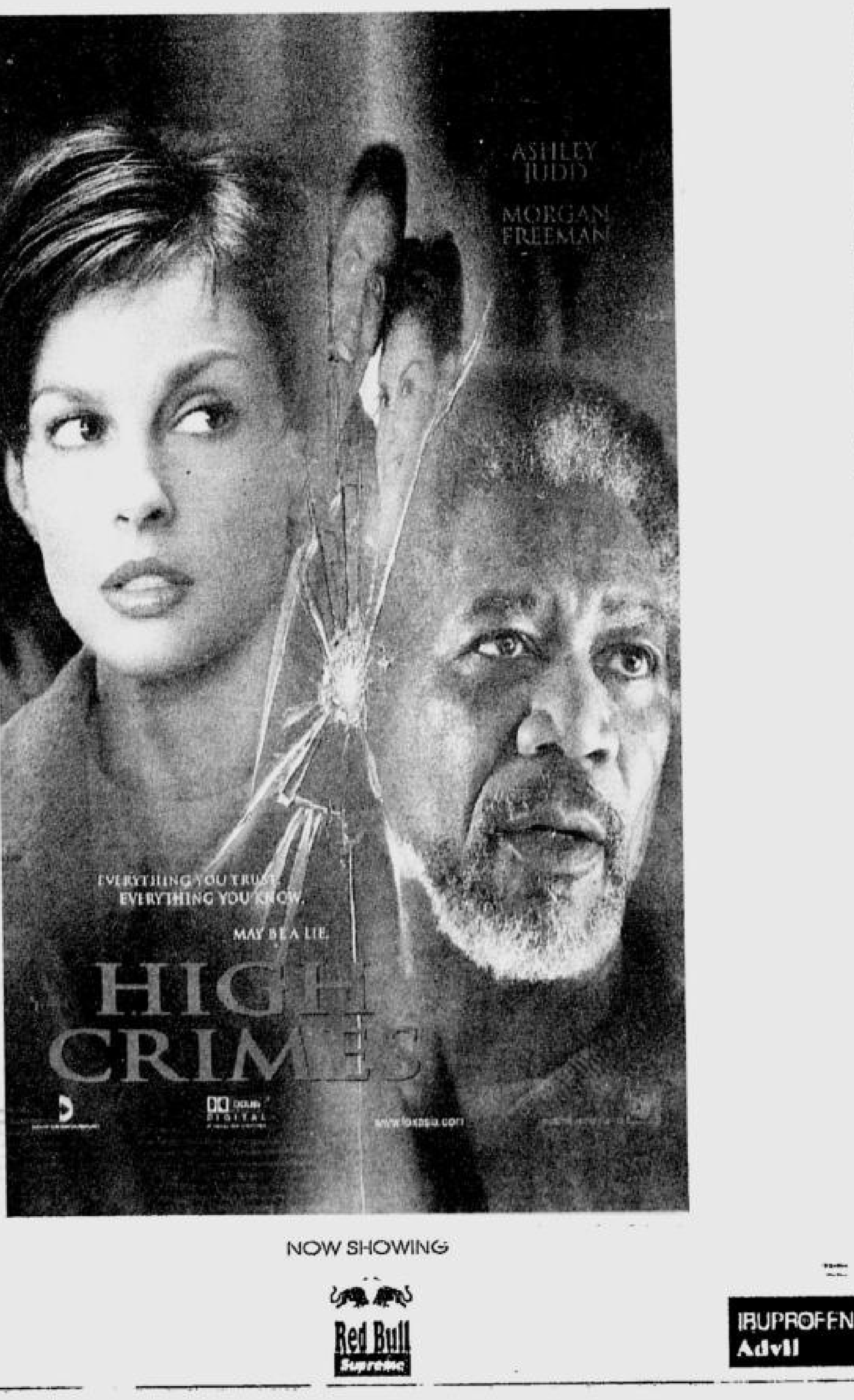

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MMDA to field ...

From page A23

The project would be implemented in the whole of Metro Manila and with the help of the local governments.

One of Fernando's plans as MMDA chair is to clear the sidewalks of impediments, including parked vehicles that block the flow of pedestrians. He earlier said that private vehicle owners must find parking spaces for their cars and that it is not the government's duty to give them parking spaces.

At the Bulong Pulungan forum at the Westin Philippine Plaza yesterday, Fernando also issued a warning to drivers and owners of public utility vehicles.

"Trucks, public utility vehicles and buses can't park on city streets overnight," he stressed. "They have to find their own garage."

He said the rule also applies to non-functioning vehicles that take up space on the streets, and added that he might look at carwashes that operate on the streets.

Fernando yesterday repeated that he is disclosing all his plans now on removing all obstructions because he wants people to take action even ahead of the MMDA.

$2.5-trillion fake T-bills ...

From page A23

tion Unit chief, said three Americans and a Japanese were behind the racket.

He identified two of the Americans as W.F. Grubl and Keith P. Leblanc. They are now the subject of an "intense manhunt," the NBI said.

Grubl was allegedly convicted of swindling in Tennessee.

"They victimize other foreigners who have money to buy these notes," De Guzman said.

"(The suspects) made it appear that these notes are old," he added. "They even waxed (the fake notes)."

Some of the confiscated boxes containing fake T-bills were presented to the media yesterday. The boxes had inscriptions that read "Federal Reserve Bonds; US Property; Series of 1934."

Lolito V. Utitco, NBI deputy director for Special Investigation Services, said the bureau began its investigation after it received reports that boxes of US dollars in $100 and $500 denominations were being kept in the warehouse.

NBI-SAU agents confirmed the reports after a surveillance operation. They then obtained a search warrant from Branch 7 Judge Enrico L. Lanzanas of the Manila Regional Trial Court, Utitco said.

The NBI agents waited for the two Americans to arrive at the warehouse. But the Americans did not show up and, after three days of waiting, the lawmen decided to raid the warehouse on July 5.

The agents were surprised when, instead of dollar bills, they found the boxes of fake treasury notes.

The US Embassy informed the NBI that the T-bills are fake. US Customs Service officials were supposed to examine the seized bills at the NBI headquarters yesterday afternoon.

Last year, NBI and US Treasury Department agents confiscated billions of dollars of fake T-bills in Cagayan De Oro, Utitco said.

"Two years ago, there was also another haul in Bangkok where a Filipino-Chinese was involved," Utitco added. "That also ran into billions (of dollars)."

Thriller, sci-fi and philosophy

From page A26

Spielberg allows two females in the film to take advantage of Anderton when he's at his most desperate and powerless.

Anderton, however, isn't just a pretty face, even if Tom Cruise is playing him. Anderton is a character with lots of emotional baggage and Cruise gives him a solid, sympathetic core.

Cruise is hypnotic in the scene where Anderton is confronting the man he's destined to kill. Watching him, you truly don't know whether or not he's going to pull the trigger and confirm what the Pre-Cogs have foreseen.

So will he or won't he? I don't know if there are any other futuristic police thrillers with a dash of ESP thrown in, but "Minority Report" sure feels like an original. There simply has been no movie like it ever made. Everything about it looks and sounds unique.

Clue hunt

As the best-known movie lover on the planet, however, Spielberg knows that even he has to respect certain genre conventions. Like all detective movies, "Minority Report" invites the viewer to hunt for clues and solve the crime before the protagonist does.

Spielberg and his slippery scriptwriters, Scott Frank and Jon Cohen, give the viewer all the clues they need to solve the crime and answer the question "Whodunit"? Of course, there are also red herrings to mislead those who don't want to think too much.

Even though I was watching the movie like a hawk, I still missed that all-important detail which was the key to the resolution. I'm all set to watch "Minority Report" again to see if the pieces of the puzzle really were there, or if I was just tricked. Maybe you'll have better luck solving this crime.

"Minority Report" is a satisfying movie on so many levels — as a detective thriller, as science fiction, and as a philosophical meditation on freedom and pre-destination.

As the first collaboration between Cruise and Spielberg, it's a mesmerizing winner. Do try to see it from the beginning.

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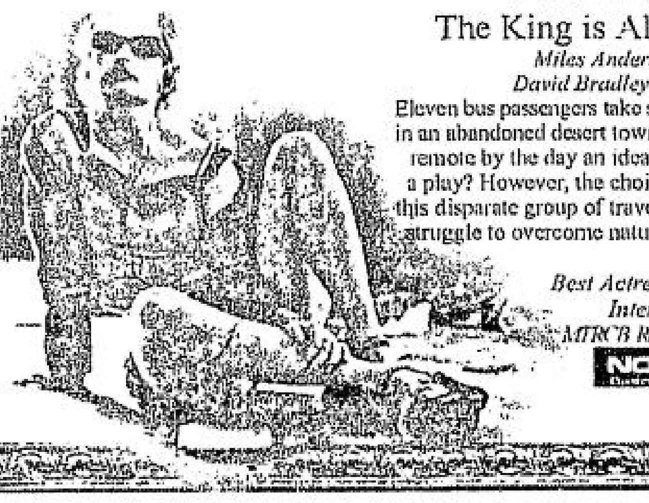
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Foregone conclusion

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

THE LOVE team of **Jericho Rosales** and **Kristine Hermosa** has scored a win at the box office with their first movie, "Forevermore." Its strong "*kilig* factor" is its major attraction.

Also appealing is its story's mythic conceit that pegs the sweetness of a hacienda's mango harvest to the love the young sweethearts feel for each other.

Also welcome is its plot and character development, especially when it comes to bear on Jericho's role. He starts out as a snobbish and self-centered young man, but changes for the better after Kristine and the other workers at the hacienda show him that there are more important things in life than success and wealth.

Having said which, we must note that the "*kilig* factor" ultimately becomes excessive because the movie keeps harping on it. Thus, the film is really for adolescents and teens, who seem to have an insatiable appetite for this sort of thing. As for older viewers, they could quickly get their fill of the movie's relentless cuteness.

This is rather a pity, because Jericho in particular has shown in his past film outings that he can do more than look cute and lovelorn. This movie is a step backwards for him in the acting department.

Also ultimately enervating is the cuteness, not just of the leads, but even of the movie's supporting characters, whose acting style here can be described as cartoonist. This is supposed to make the film look delightful, but it often comes across as forced and trying-hard.

Thus, while the movie tries to come off as visually innovative, it's really as old as the hills when it comes to material and style. The fact that today's teenagers still go for this dated sort of thing just goes to show that clichés haven't really been updated on the local romantic-comedy film scene.

The film's last section is particularly awkward. The time comes when Jericho has to choose between Kristine and his *sosyal* girlfriend from Manila, and he clearly chooses Kristine—but she's *still* made to pine for him while the Manila girl twists the knife and talks like she hasn't been dumped.

This does give Kristine more scenes in which she can weep and agonize and gain the audience's sympathy, but it distends the movie and prolongs the agony.

Another contributing factor in this regard is the fact that the actress who plays the Manila girl is clearly no match for Kristine in terms of looks and appeal. So, Jericho's decision to love Kristine instead is too much of a foregone conclusion. Of such mismatched choices are weak and over-obvious movie endings made.

Boob-tube booboos

HOST: What do you think of the controversy over the replacement of some top police officials for their failure to control jueteng in their areas?

Guest: I think there's just too much bourhaha over it!

(Bourhaha? *Bago yon, a*—Oh, you mean brouhaha!)

* * *

Host: What is your review of the movie you saw this week?

Co-host: I didn't like it so much. In fact, it was disappointing.

Host: Why, what was the problem?

Co-host: It was the underwritten script, or the overwritten one, I don't know.

(*That's* supposed to be a movie review? Make up your mind!)

* * *

Host: Your career was going so well, but you dropped out. What happened?

Guest: I know, I took my success for granted. It did not occur my mind I would lose it all!

(*Ano daw?*)

* * *

Host: Some people say you were involved in a crime recently. What do you have to say?

Guest: It's completely false. I was out of friends that day!

(An out-of-body experience, huh?)

Thriller, sci-fi and philosophy

From page A30

When the grayish 20th Century Fox logo announces the start of "Minority Report," you may think for a second that this movie was shot in black and white, though it's not. What Spielberg and his much-imitated cinematographer Janusz Kaminski have done is make the colored equivalent of the black-and-white noir films which Hollywood cranked out in the '30s. Instead of blacks and whites, Spielberg uses a palette of black, blues and grays to paint a vision of the future that looks oppressively cold and mechanical. What the color green was to "The Matrix," blue-gray is to "Minority Report."

There are, however, a few things about 2054 which we can look forward to, if Spielberg and his think-tank of "visual futurists" are to be believed. My favorite is the device which turns camcorder footage into life-size, three-dimensional holograms. The scene where Anderton uses it to "interact" with his missing son and absent wife is the quietest, most poignant scene in the movie.

Big boys' toys

Most of the toys in "Minority Report," however, are for the big boys. Policemen fly like Superman with the aid of rocket packs on their backs, allowing them to capture fleeing criminals. There's also a wish-fulfillment arcade which allows customers to live out their fantasies, whether they be sexual or ego-affirming. With this technology, who needs to go to Fantasy Island?

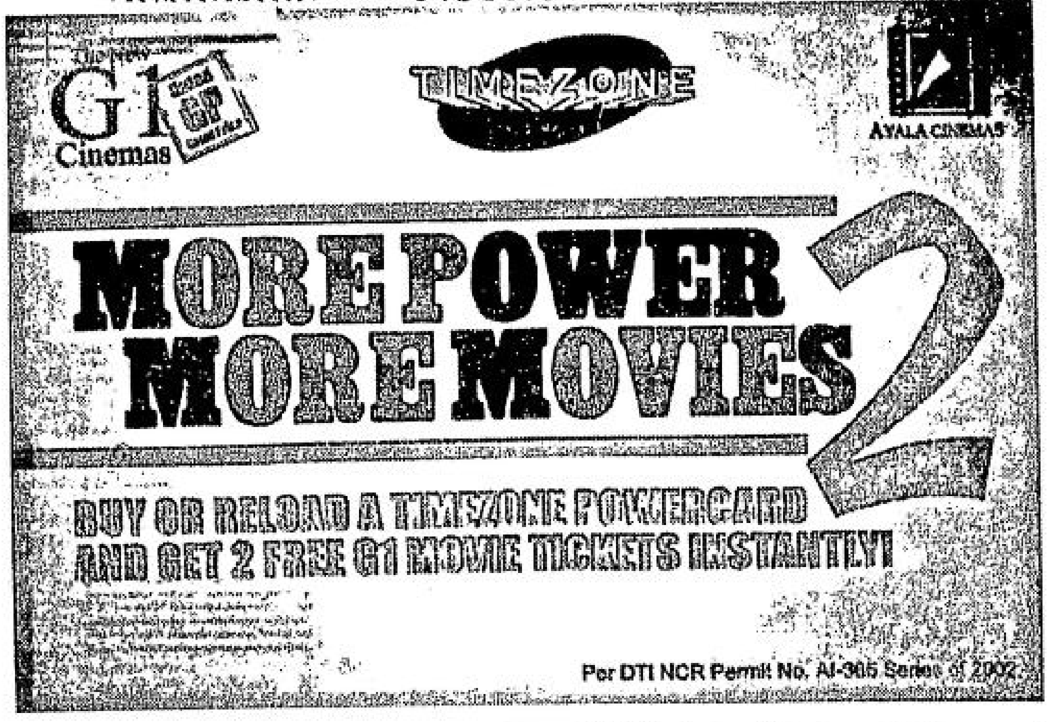
The coolest toy, however, would have to be the new Lexus which figures prominently in the heart-stopping scene where Anderton's fellow cops are trying to arrest him. Anderton doesn't only use the car (which runs horizontally on roads and vertically along the sides of skyscrapers), he gets to be a part of its creation.

And then there are the ads. According to "Minority Report," advertisements a few decades from now will speak to us individually and address us by name in public places. After a split-second scanning of your eyeballs, a gorgeous holographic model will utter your name and tell you what you have to buy.

Solid, sympathetic

It's a tribute to Tom Cruise's enormous star wattage that he's never overwhelmed by these gimmicks and gadgets. In fact, Spielberg uses the handsome actor's reputation as a lady magnet to make the viewers laugh (or grimace, depending on your taste) in two scenes. Knowing that girls can't resist Cruise's appeal,

THRILLER/ A25



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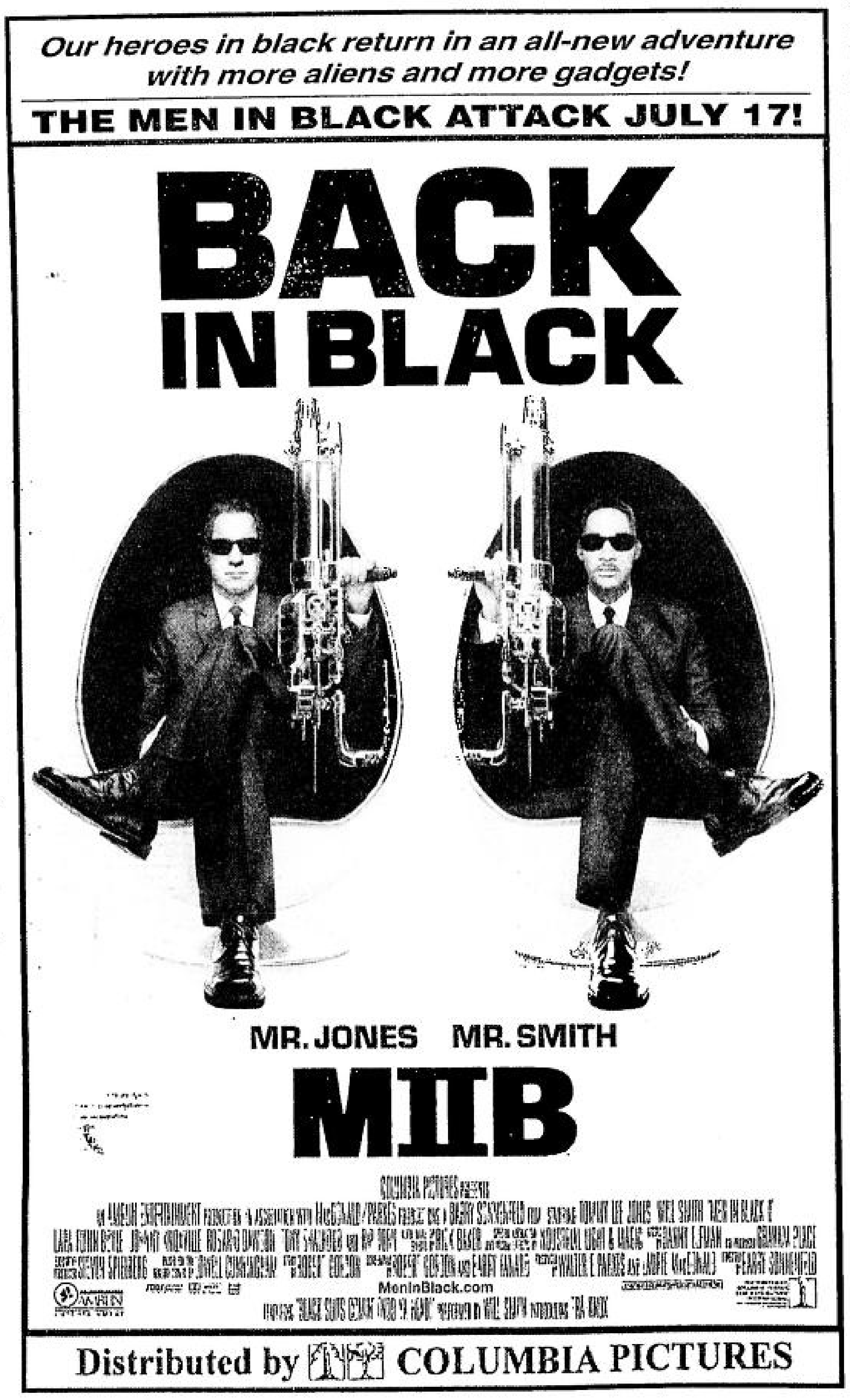

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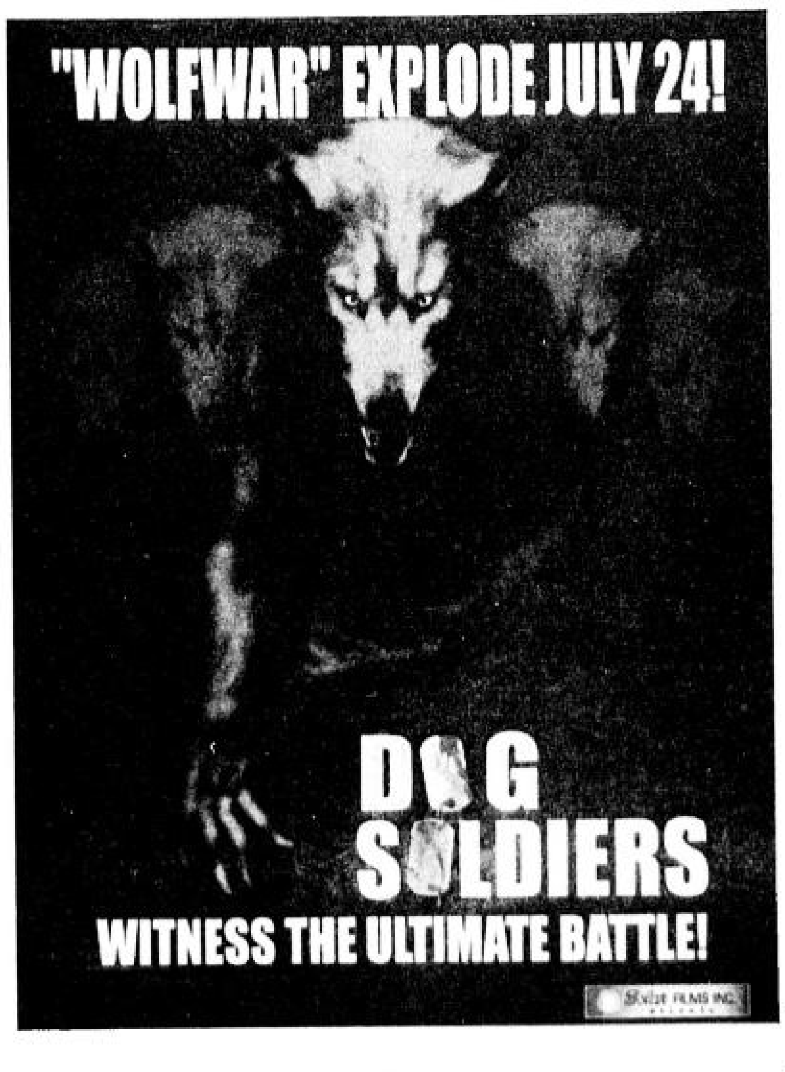


Prayers pour for Kristine Garcia as cancer returns

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Leah Salteric

ACTRESS **Kristine Garcia** thought she had been rid of breast cancer after her right breast was removed last year. But the cancer recently reappeared in her left breast.

Kristine told close friend director **Boots Plata** that she lost all hope after she found out that the disease had recurred. She even thought of ending her life, she said.

But a lot of people care for Kristine and they're offering her moral support and prayers.

In her text message to Direk Boots, Kristine said: "I'm so touched and overwhelmed by the number of people who care. I've lost hope and really wanted to end it all. But now, I'm having second thoughts."

Ang-4 better than original versions

THE TEXT message I received from singer-comedian **Dyords Javier** early last week was brief and simple: "Ang-4 will perform at Conways starting Wednesday. Bring the whole *barkada.*"

When I got to the office that day, INQUIRER national editor **Jun Bandayrel**, a long-time friend of Dyords, said he received the same message. It didn't take much convincing from Jun to make me drive to Conway's Bar at Makati Shangri-La Wednesday night.

I've seen other bands perform at Conway's, like Side A and Channels, so I initially found it hard to reconcile a group like Ang-4 with the crowd in the posh hotel music lounge.

Ang-4 is known not just for its brilliant four-part harmony but also for its hilarious comedy sketches. With Dyords in the group are **Pinky Marquez**, **Isay Alvarez** and **Bimbo Cerrudo**, who replaced **Mon David** three years ago.

From the time they opened the show with the Fifth Dimension hit, "Aquarius," Ang-4 enraptured the audience. The four did one number after another—"Say a Little Prayer," "How Sweet It Is," medleys of Kalapana tunes ("Hurt," "Nightbird") and soul hits. Their beautiful four-part harmony intensifies every number.

For Conway's, however, the Ang-4 quartet did away with their gags and antics.

"The crowd here is not suited for that kind of entertainment," Dyords told us after the show. "They want to move and dance, so we just sing. But in the other places where we perform, we inject comedy into the show."

Hence, it was a night of purely music and entertainment at Conway's. The repertoire was carefully selected to fill-up two hours of songs that pleased the audience.

In "I Can't Stop Loving You," Dyords crooned the solo part and the rest did the backup vocals. It was a different arrangement that was perfect for the group.

Pinky belted out "Natural Woman," while Dyords again regaled the crowd with "I'm Just a Gigolo."

Midway into the show, the group invited four guests from the audience to join them onstage in "To Love Somebody." One was a male tourist from Brazil who was apparently still jubilant after his country bagged the World Cup title for the fourth time. He gamely sang the refrain.

Another was former singer-actress **Dinah Dominguez**, who told Bimbo to sing the first voice while she did the second voice. Dinah, who doesn't mind being tagged as the mom of young star **Champagne Morales**, obviously missed performing onstage. As wife and mother, she is enjoying her life away from the limelight. When she faced the audience again, Dinah sang with much gusto and revealed the talent which once catapulted her to show biz fame.

When it was time for requests, Ang-4 generously dished out songs the audience wanted to hear. Pinky obliged my request for "As If We Never Said Goodbye," the beautiful theme of the Broadway musical, "Sunset Boulevard."

Bimbo did **James Ingram**'s "One Hundred Ways" and Isay belted out "Bridges."

Dyords hardly participated in this portion and simply read the thick bunch of request cards from the audience. But he would make facial expressions and movements that left the crowd in stitches.

The Ang-4 members individually stood out onstage with their respective singing prowess. Of course, collectively, they are even better as a quartet. A four-man band backs up the group in a stage devoid of any frills.

Ang-4 later did a stirring, four-part harmony of "The Prayer," originally a duet recorded by **Andrea Boccelli** and **Celine Dion**. It was the first time we heard "The Prayer" in four different voices and it was stirring.

Isay's hubby, **Robert Seña**, was celebrating his birthday that night and watched the show with his male friends. When Ang-4 called him to the stage, Robert did an astounding, well-applauded "Lately."

He was perhaps even better than the original singer, **Stevie Wonder**.

Toward the end of the show, Ang-4 got the audience to its feet with a string of dance ditties—"Boogie Wonderland," "Shake Your Groove Thing," "Haven't Stopped Dancing," "Rock the Boat," "Dance With Me," "Dancing Queen," a medley of **Teri Desario**'s hits, as well as a medley of VST and Co. hits.

From start to end, the energy of the four artists was unflagging and infectious.

Watch Ang-4 in other venues like Strumm's on Jupiter Street in Makati City on Tuesdays and at the lobby of Edsa Shangri-La Hotel in Mandaluyong City on Thursdays.

Dish at 1

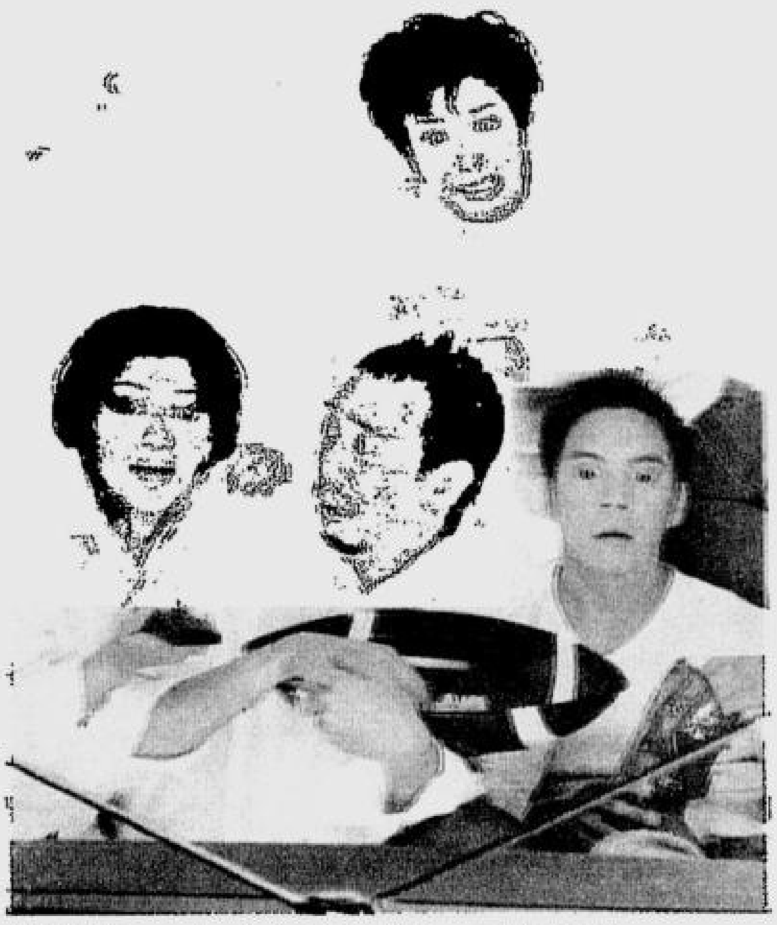
ONE of my favorite night haunts, Dish, on the 3rd level of Rockwell's Power Plant Mall, celebrates its first anniversary with two special nights.

Wednesday, July 17, is retro night with several bands that include Rockin' Revival, Q & A, and Spirit of '67.

Performing on Thursday, July 18, are **Noel Cabangon**, Rage Band, Elements, Side A, with surprise bands and guests.

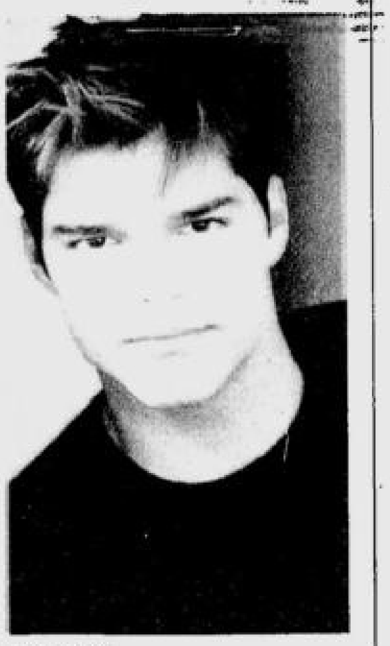
A percentage of the sales on the anniversary nights will be donated to the Make-a-Wish Foundation.

Dish will also hold a wine and cheese launch on July 12, 4 to 7 p.m.



ANG-4. Known for their brilliant four-part harmony.

Ricky Martin to hold 3-night Manila concert in September



MARTIN

PUERTO Rican pop music superstar Ricky Martin will hold a three-night concert in Manila on Sept. 27, 28 and 29, in an open-air venue at The Fort.

Ricky rose to international singing stardom with chart-topping hits like "La Vida Loca," "Maria," "She-Bangs" and "Private Emotions" (a duet with Meja), among others.

Ricky first came to Manila in the mid-'80s as part of the teen music group Menudo, whose other members included his fellow Puerto Ricans such as Robby Rosa and Charlie Maso.

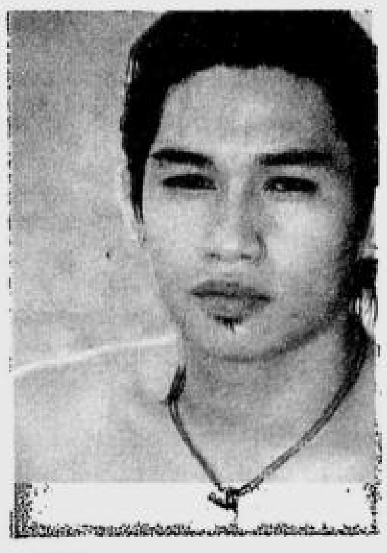
Four years ago, Ricky returned to Manila as a solo artist, but only to promote his album.

His three-night concert in September will mark the first time that Ricky will perform in the country.

His concert is the first production venture of Emma Entertainment, a New York-based company owned by information technology specialist and businessman Jonathan Crane.

Former band man sings solo tunes

By Marinel R. Cruz



MALIK

WHILE the western world's airwaves, music charts and concert circuit are dominated by the R&B kings and queens, the Philippine counterparts are dominated mostly by female divas, who often leave little room for the males.

New R&B crooner Malik is trying to snatch some space in that crowded area.

R&B is perhaps best represented in the west by a male and female mix of acts like Mary J. Blige, R. Kelly, Ashanti, Usher, Alicia Keys, Babyface, Sade and Brian McKnight. On local shores, the prominent R&B artists include Kyla, Anna Fegi, Jaya, Lani Misalucha and Bituin Escalante. All women.

"There are a lot of guys who can sing very well," Malik tells the INQUIRER. "I believe that with the right song, the right timing and luck we men will be noticed."

He says he feels confident his songs will sell enough for pirates to take notice. He's joking, of course.

"Actually, the composers of the song in my album are enough reason to buy the album," he says with a straight face.

Malik makes his bid for music stardom with his 12-track self-titled album from MCA Universal. Its key track, "You are My Heart," is a collaboration by Brian McKnight and Brandon Barnes.

Although there are other songs in his album that he fancies, he says the McKnight original is his personal favorite. "It's not every day that Brian McKnight writes a song for a new artist like me," he adds.

He also considers Stevie Wonder, Tower of Power and Usher as his musical influences. Given the chance, he says, he would love to collaborate with our own, Freestyle and South Border, for his second album.

His debut record also features the works of some of the industry's finest composers like Jeff Damo ("Never Lonely"), Gino Cruz ("Kahit Na"), Mike Luis ("Everyday Everynight"), Freddie Saturno ("Kung Magagawa Ko Lamang") and Arnie Medaros ("Say You'll Love Me").

At 26, Malik is actually no tyro in the music scene. He used to be the lead vocalist of bands, like the Union, Soul Republic and Coolwind, since he was 19.

He has no formal training in music and has no other musicians in his family. "Pure guts and my genuine love of music have kept me going all these years," he says.

After his last group disbanded, Malik hooked up with manager Wyngard Tracy and MCA Universal. "I'm very thankful that I belong to a company that takes good care of its talents," he says. "They have been really choosy with the album materials. That's why it took a year to make this album."

Aside from weekly gigs this month at Suburbia in Malate, Malik is also on GMA 7's noontime variety show "SOP." "I learn a lot from the more seasoned artists in the show," he says.

When he finally gets his own space in the business, Malik can teach the younger ones a lot, too.

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2 THE POWERPUFF GIRLS	3 HIGH CRIMES 12:30, 3:00, 5:30, 8:00, 10:30	2 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION	2 HIGH CRIMES 10:50, 1:20, 3:50, 6:20, 8:50, 11:20	2 THE POWERPUFF GIRLS
3 ALL ABOUT BENJAMIN	4 BAD COMPANY 5 LIFE OR SOMETHING . . .	3 IRIS	3 AMELIE 1:00, 3:35, 6:10, 8:45, 11:20 4 BIG FAT LIAR 11:20, 1:20, 3:20, 5:20, 7:20, 9:20	3 ALL ABOUT BENJAMIN 4 BIG FAT LIAR
4 MINORITY REPORT	6 MINORITY REPORT 7 BIG FAT LIAR	TRUE FAITH @ ONSTAGE JULY 12 (FRI.) - 9 PM	5 POWERPUFF GIRLS 11:20, 1:20, 3:20, 5:20, 7:20, 9:20	5 MINORITY REPORT

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3 (DTS) THE SUM OF ALL FEARS
4 GOLD (DTS) POWER PUFF GIRLS
5 GOLD (DOLBY) BIG FAT LIAR
6 GOLD (SDDS) MINORITY REPORT
7 GOLD (DOLBY) HIGH CRIMES
8 FOREVERMORE
9 LIFE OR SOMETHING LIKE IT
10 JUST VISITING

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486

1
2
3 (DTS)
4
5
6 (DTS)
Golden Pearl THX

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3274

1 SUGAT
2 HIGH CRIMES
3 ALL ABOUT BENJAMIN

starmall Movies
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1 BAD COMPANY
2 ALL ABOUT BENJAMIN
3 KATAWAN MO .
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL) MINORITY REPORT
5 SUGAT

METROPOLIS star
tel 850.4285

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2 FOREVERMORE
3 LIFE OR SOMETHING LIKE IT
4 HIGH CRIMES
5 SUGAT
6 POWER PUFF GIRLS
7
8

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(Makati City) TEL. 751-2010 TO 13

1 HIGH CRIMES

Center Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

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FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL, INC
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Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781

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1 BUKANG BIBIG
2

Berma
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1 SUGAT
2 MINORITY REPORT

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Cinema 2000 Target Mall
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2 FOREVERMORE
3 (DTS) JUST VISITING

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(Urdaneta) tel (075) 568.6771

1 A WALK TO REMEMBER
2 SCOOBY DOO
3 THE SUM OF ALL FEARS
4

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1 FOREVERMORE
2 A WALK TO REMEMBER
3 (DOLBY) THE SUM OF ALL FEARS
4 (DTS) SCOOBY DOO

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(Alabang) tel 850.1276

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2 SUGAT
3 KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
4 (DTS)

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

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2 FOREVERMORE
3 (DTS) SLACKERS
4 KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
5

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1 FOREVERMORE
2 MINORITY REPORT
3 KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249-2558

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2 MINORITY REPORT
3 KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO

Olivarez Tagaytay
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2 RESERVE
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(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736

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2
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Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

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Fourstep
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3 MINORITY REPORT

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(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

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Jade Cinema
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2 JUST VISITING
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8 ALL ABOUT BENJAMIN

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SM CITY NORTH EDSA
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12 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

SM SOUTHMALL
8006868

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4 BENEATH LOCHNESS
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6 RESIDENT EVIL
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SM CITY ILOILO
3209422

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3 FRUIT IS SWELLING
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8 RESIDENT EVIL

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7128015

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5 TAMPISAW
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1 POWERPUFF GIRLS
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4 FOREVERMORE

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2 A WALK TO REMEMBER
3 40 DAYS & 40 NIGHTS
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1 BAD COMPANY
2 MURDER BY NUMBERS
3 DISKARTE
4 CASS & CARY
5 FOREVERMORE
6 MINORITY REPORT

Iloilo
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2 RESIDENT EVIL
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4 FRUIT IS SWELLING
5 IN THE BEDROOM
6 FOREVERMORE

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Lani to repeat Crossover show

JULY evenings promise to be more enchanting as Song Goddess Lani Misalucha holds a repeat of her Crossover series in an equally intimate setting. The two-night show, "Lani—The Repeat . . . A Crossover Special," is at 9 p.m. on July 12 and 13 at Le Pavilion, Metropolitan Park, Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City.

The show will be produced by the same team that mounted Lani's successful six-night Crossover series at Onstage last summer.

Regarded as one of the most powerful voices in the industry today, Lani will surely be in her element as she belts out one song after another and weaves the kind of magic that has both enthralled and endeared her to her audience.

Only in her fifth year in the music industry, Lani, who is being managed by the team of Ronnie and Ida Henares of Primeline, Inc., has become one of the most sought-after performers in the local concert scene.

In the repeat of her Onstage concert series, Lani will be directed by Rowell Santiago, with Louie Ocampo as musical director. She will be backed-up by Hotlegs Dancers in her production numbers. Singing newcomer Jed Maddela and Yamani join her as guest artists.

The event, produced by 105.1 Crossover, is co-presented by Shell Diesoline Ultra, Opel Astra, Bayfresh Fresh-On Fabric Freshener and PS Bank.

For 24-hour ticket reservations and delivery, call 844-2947 or 844-8159.

MISALUCHA

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ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101	
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	FOREVERMORE
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	MINORITY REPORT
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (SDS)	HIGH CRIMES
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	ALL ABOUT BENJAMIN
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	POWERPUFF GIRLS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	BIG FAT LIAR
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY)	BAD COMPANY
FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY)	SUGAT
FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY)	POWERPUFF GIRLS
FIESTA CARNIVAL	
NEW FRONTIER	
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	SANA TOTOO NA / SENSES
ODEON	HIGH CRIMES
ODEON-2	SPY GAMES / DEADLINE BEIRUT
ROBEN	SUGAT
TANDEM-1	MAMASAN
TANDEM-2	MONSTER'S BALL
TIMES	COLLATERAL DAMAGE / MIMIC-2
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	ORIGINAL SIN
QUEZON-1	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
REMAR	SUGAT
REMAR-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	SUGAT
B	
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	HIGH CRIMES
CINEMA-2	POWERPUFF GIRLS
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	DISKARTE
CINEMA-2	TAMPISAW
CINEMA-3	FOREVERMORE
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	MINORITY REPORT
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CINEMA-6	SLACKERS
CINEMA-7	THE SUM OF ALL FEARS
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CINEMA-9 (DTS)	MINORITY REPORT
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	LIFE OR SOMETHING . .
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	JUST VISITING
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CINEMA-15	FOREVERMORE
LORES	
CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	BAD COMPANY
CINEMA-2	POWERPUFF GIRLS
CINEMA-3	BIG FAT LIAR
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UNIWIDE METROMALL	
(LAS PIÑAS)	
CINEMA-1	
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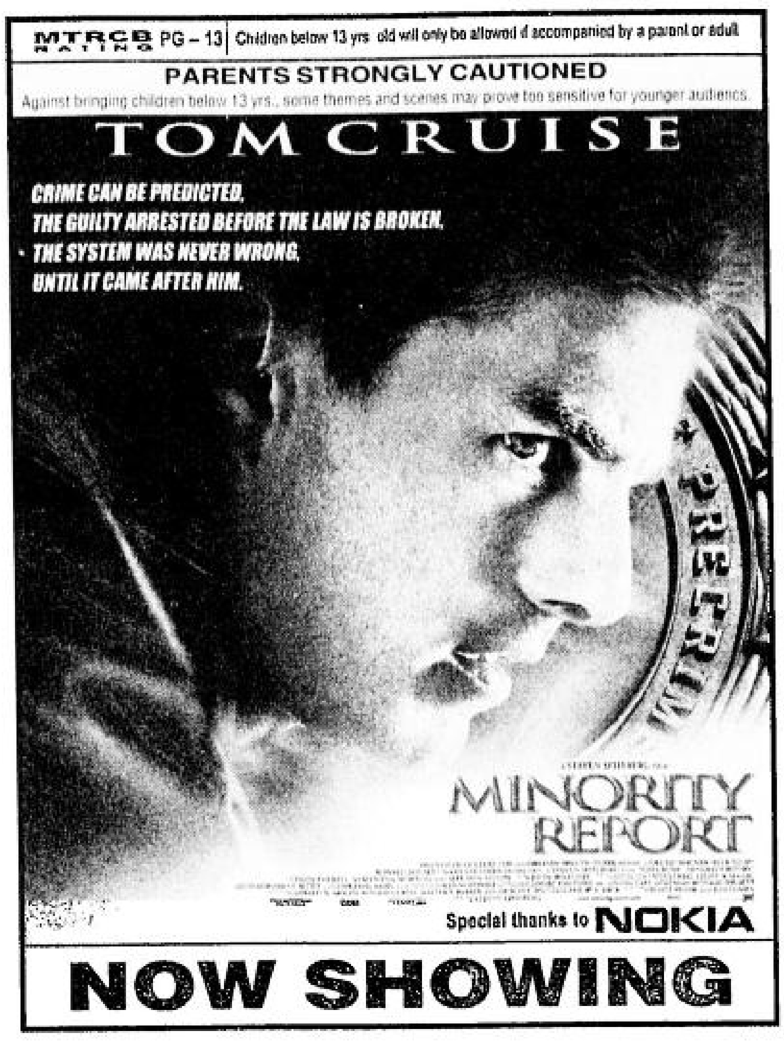
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARAÑAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	ALIPIN NG TUKSO
CINEMA-2	THE OTHER SIDE OF LOVE
CINEMA-4	ALAMID


MTRCB RATING PG – 13 | Children below 13 yrs old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult
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Against bringing children below 13 yrs., some themes and scenes may prove too sensitive for younger audiences.
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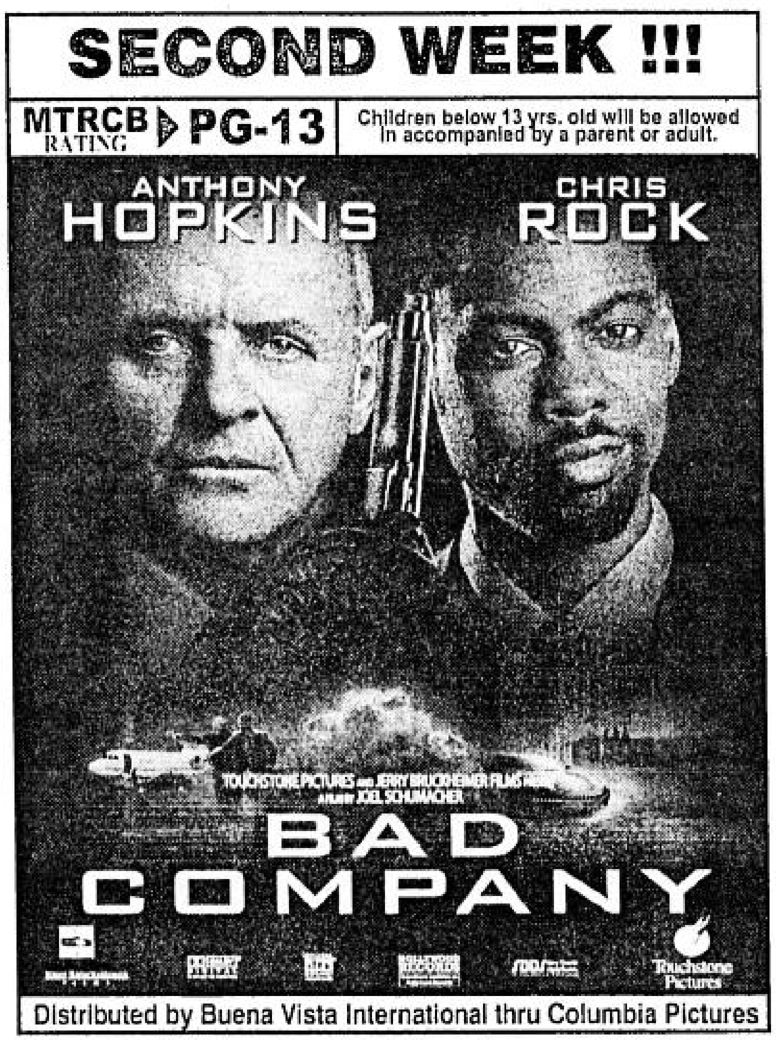
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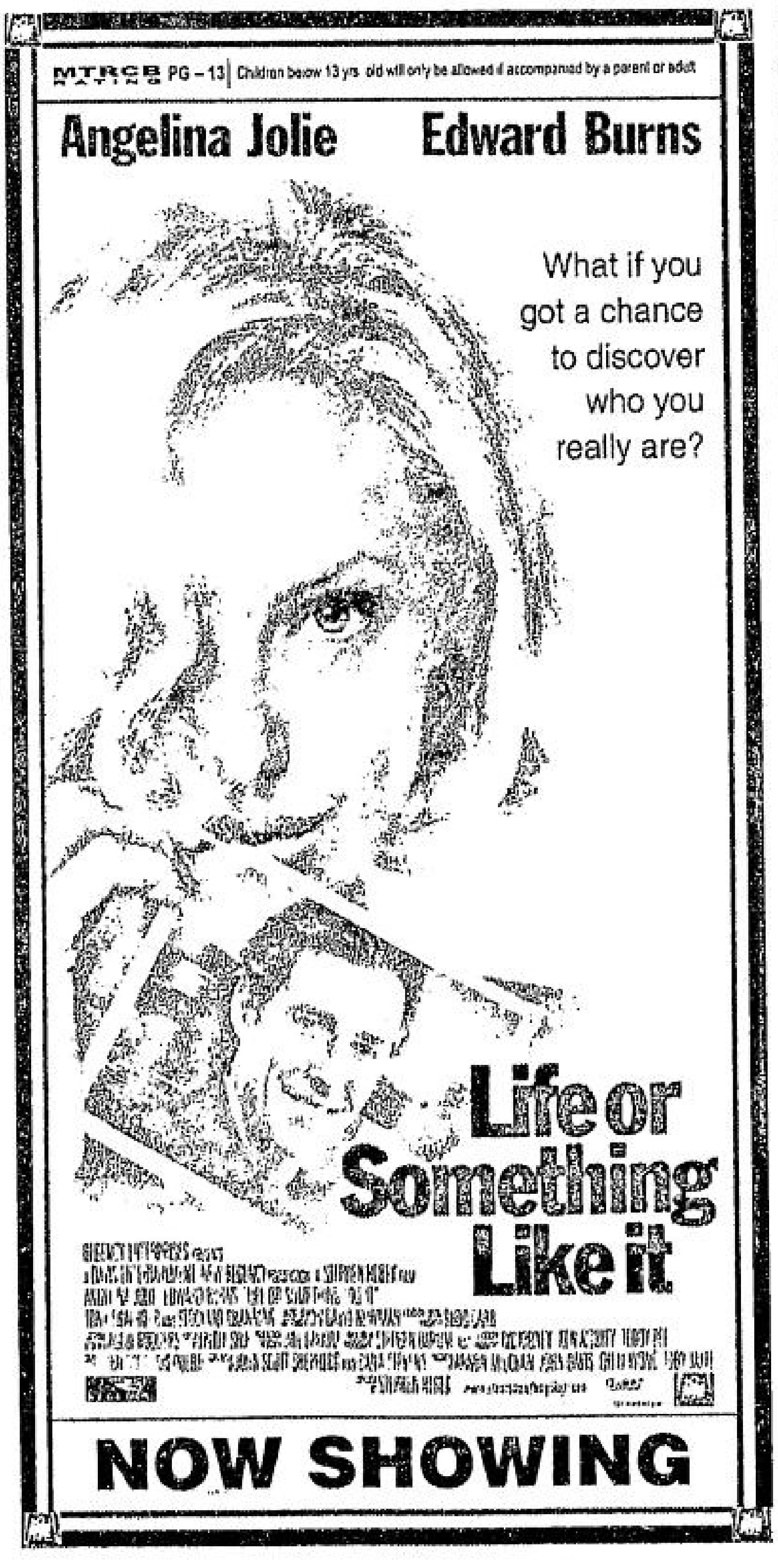
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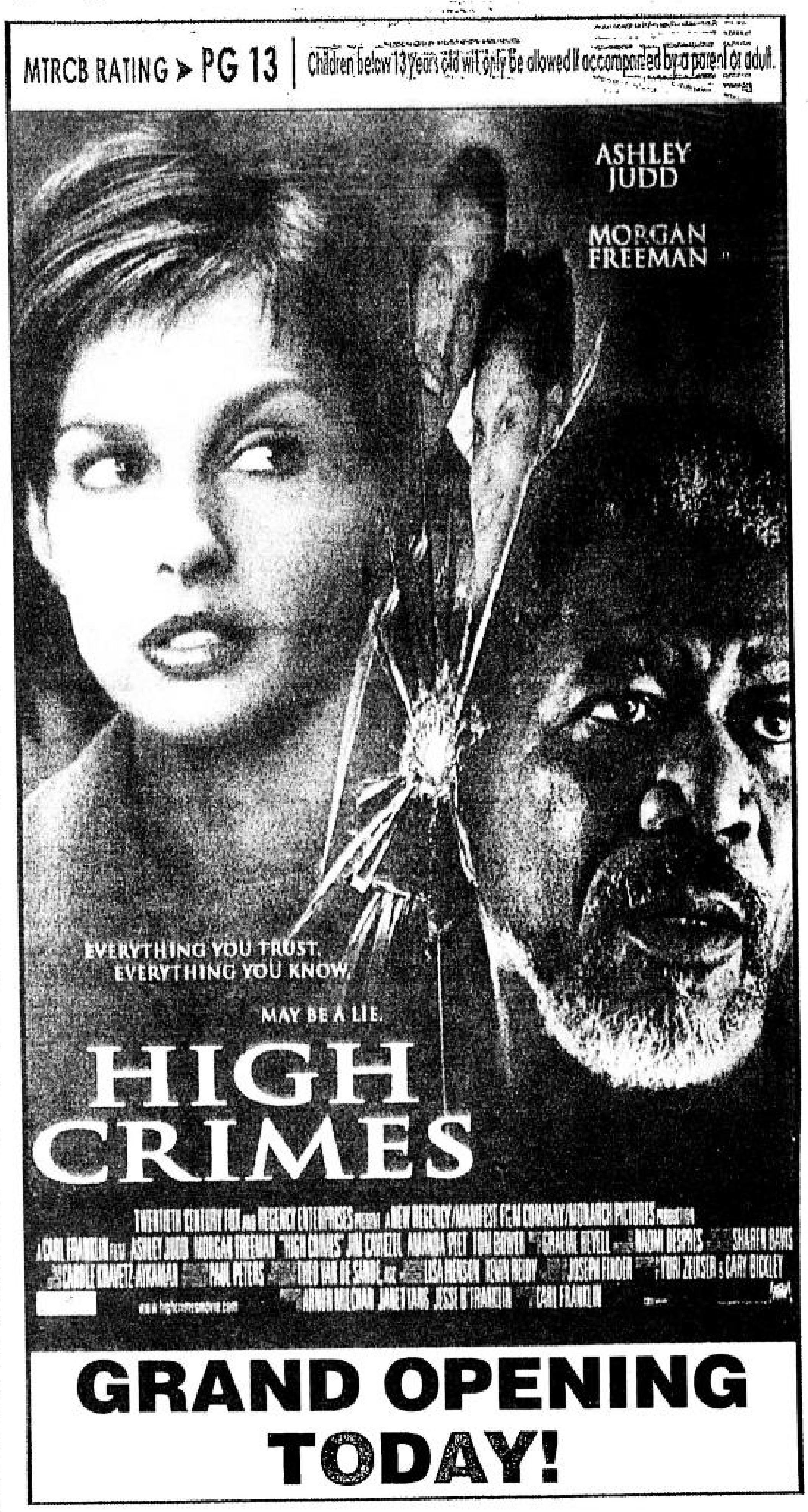
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ENTERTAINMENT

Editor **Louie C. Camino**

Studios spending more to lure family audience

"MEN IN BLACK 2." Tommy Lee Jones (left) and Will Smith.

LOS ANGELES—The family that pays together has really caught Hollywood's eye.

It's prime time for the family film, with studios putting more resources into wholesome fare, recognizing the value of movies that can take in four or five admissions at once when parents turn out with the entire brood.

Starting with "Scooby-Doo" in mid-June, Hollywood will have delivered at least one G- or PG-rated film for nine straight weekends through early August, an unusually long streak even in the family-minded summer season.

According to Motion Picture Association of America rating definitions, G means "General audiences. All ages admitted," and PG means "Parental guidance suggested. Some material may not be suitable for children."

"I notice there's some really fun stuff coming out, and these family films seem to be doing well," said Geena Davis, who returns as the perky matriarch in "Stuart Little 2," with Michael J. Fox again providing the voice of the spunky rodent.

"I think studios are getting it now," she added. "It seems they're developing more family films because they've realized families are always looking for movies they can go see together."

Joining "Stuart Little 2" and recent animated releases "Lilo & Stitch" and "Hey Arnold! The Movie" are "Spy Kids 2: Island of Lost Dreams," with the pint-size agents facing rival kid spies; "Like Mike," featuring teenage hip-hop star Bow Wow as an orphan who becomes a pro basketball sensation after he's given sneakers he believes are Michael Jordan's hand-me-downs; and "The Crocodile Hunter: Collision Course," a fictionalized big-screen adaptation of the Aussie wildlife TV show.

Also, "The Country Bears," with Christopher Walken and the voice of Haley Joel Osment in the reunion story of an "all-bear" rock band; Dana Carvey's "The Master of Disguise," about a sweet-natured waiter who uses his mimicry skills to rescue his kidnapped dad; and "The Powerpuff Girls Movie," adapted from the TV cartoon about three kindergarten superheroes.

The crowded market means more family films competing for the same audience, but one of Hollywood's guiding principles is that moviegoing begets more moviegoing.

"I don't think there's any competition whatsoever," said Steve Irwin, who essentially plays himself in the movie version of "Crocodile Hunter," with a make-believe spy caper built around him and a rogue reptile. "These movies are all very different, and I think the more choices people have, the more they will go to the movies."

"Like Mike" director John Schultz, whose movie squared off against the debut of "Men in Black II" over the Fourth of July, said: "The nice thing is a lot of people are going to go for 'Men in Black,' and if theaters are sold out, they'll hopefully go see our movie."

The summer lineup follows a healthy roster of family fare over the last year, among them "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone," "Shrek," "Monsters Inc.," "Ice Age," "Jimmy Neutron: Boy Genius," "Dr. Dolittle 2," "The Princess Diaries," "The Rookie" and "Spirit: Stallion of the Cimarron."

This year brought the return of two family favorites, "E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial" and "Beauty and the Beast," in new versions with added scenes.

Even this year's biggest moneymakers, "Spider-Man" and "Star Wars: Episode II–Attack of the Clones," have strong family appeal beyond their core audience of action fans.

The fall and holiday season brings "Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets," the first sequel to 2001's biggest hit, along with the animated "The Wild Thornberrys Movie," adapted from the TV cartoon.

The success of some recent family films has hinged on studios' willingness to spare no expense on sets, cast, visual effects and story development. While many family films still are made comparatively cheaply, top-of-the-line projects such as "Harry Potter," "Stuart Little" or "Monsters Inc." can cost $100 million or more, budgets in line with huge action thrillers.

"You can't just slap a family moniker on it and therefore people will come," said Paul Dergarabedian, Exhibitor Relations president. "Family audiences are even more discerning than the specialty audiences. You cannot underestimate the power of that family audience. When the films are there, they really turn out. *AP*

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'MINORITY REPORT'

Thriller, sci-fi and philosophy

By Paul Daza

REVIEW

"MINORITY REPORT" is a gripping, ingenious thriller.

Propped by a clever plot and filled with eerie twists and haunting characters, the movie delivers enough nail-biting adventure to satisfy even the most demanding moviegoer.

Based on a short story by Philip Dick, "Minority Report" is set in Washington DC in the year 2054. In this setting, policemen can now arrest murderers before the latter kill their intended prey. Their secret weapons are three Pre-Cognitives (Pre-Cogs) with psychic powers who can see murders minutes or hours before they happen, as well as identify the would-be killer and victim.

The Pre-Crime unit which police detective John Anderton (Tom Cruise) heads only has to determine where the crime will take place, based on clues implanted in the visions of the Pre-Cogs, which the policemen can examine as easily as actual crime footage.

Anderton likes working for this "perfect" system: Preventing murders helps ease the guilt he feels from losing his son to a kidnapper six years before. His downward spiral begins, however, when the Pre-Cogs see in a shared vision that Anderton himself will kill a man he's never met in 36 hours. Could there be a glitch in the system, or is Anderton really going to kill a total stranger?

In trying to answer these questions, Anderton becomes a fugitive cop betrayed by the very system he helped to establish.

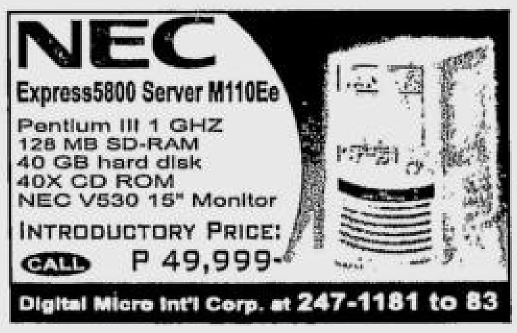
Far from sunny

Taking his cues from the very paranoid storyline, Steven Spielberg concocts a future America that is far from sunny. It's probably the most colorless movie the acclaimed director has made.

THRILLER/ A26

BUSINESS

Editor Raul O. Marcelo ◆ Assistant Editor Corrie S. Narisma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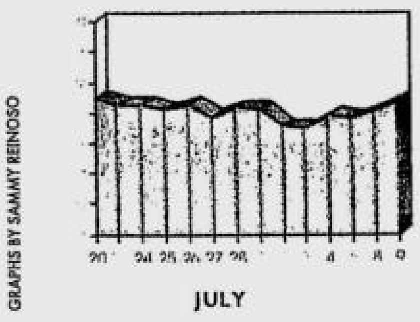
Treasury rejects all T-bill bids

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

PESO - DOLLAR



PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P 50.29 = $1
As of 5 p.m., July 9, 2002

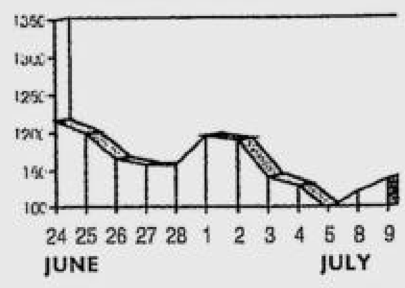
¥ 118.58 = $1
As of 5 p.m., July 9, 2002

GOLD: $312.10/312.60
per ounce Hong Kong, July 9, 2002

STOCK MARKET

Shares end higher

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

SHARES finished higher yesterday, extending their rebound for a second straight day on a steady recovery in the share price of index heavyweight Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., traders said.

The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index rose 17.20 points, or 1.5 percent, to 1,138.43 after gaining 1.51 points Monday.

The broader All Shares Index gained 5.49 points to 685.54 after rising 3.77 points the previous session.

Gainers beat losers 39 to 20, with 33 issues unchanged.

PLDT, which sank to a record low of P307.50 on Friday, extended its gains on continued bargain-hunting. PLDT rose P17.50 to P332.50 on heavy volume, accounting for nearly a third of yesterday's trading.

Mike Ordinanza, an analyst at PCI Capital Corp., said the still thin trading volume in the stock market clearly showed investors were still awaiting fresh incentives to buy aggressively into the market.

That incentive may come soon as corporations start to report, in the coming weeks, results for the second quarter, which Ordinanza expects to be a substantial improvement from the first quarter, especially for banks.

Second quarter results must be submitted by Aug. 15.

Analysts believe that with interest rates still low and the peso gaining ground against the dollar, investors will start taking a second look on stocks. **AP**

By Clarissa S. Batino

ARMED with P62.9 billion in proceeds from the retail bond issue and $300 million from a global bond float, the government rejected for the second straight treasury bill auction all bids of banks to prevent local interest rates from going up.

Deputy Treasurer Eduardo Mendiola said even with the huge deficit in the first five months, the fixed-income market has no reason to drive interest rates higher given a stable exchange rate and a very modest inflation rate of 3 percent as of June.

"I think the signal today is very clear and that is, we will not allow interest rates to move up. We can sustain this rejection for a long time," the treasury official said.

The Treasury sold P62.9 billion worth of three- and five-year retail bonds and raised $300 million from the seven-year global bond market last month.

Had the auction committee led by the Bureau of Treasury accepted yesterday's bids, the 91-day treasury bill yield would have gone up by 29 basis points to 5.068 percent, the 182-day by 78 points to 6.516 percent, and the 364-day by 108.5 points to 6.941 percent.

Instead, the average rates were kept at 4.778 percent for the benchmark treasuries, 5.736 percent for the six-month, and 5.856 percent for the one-year debt instruments.

Banks not only bid high yesterday but their tenders of P1.14 billion for the six-month treasuries and P1.35 billion for the one-year debt papers were way below the auction size of P3 billion and P2.5 billion.

Only the 91-day debt notes generated sufficient tenders of P3.517 billion corresponding to an auction volume of P3.5 billion. But even this indication of substantial interest was not enough to convince the government to accept the bids.

Mendiola said the auction committee studied the bids to see whether there was a portion that could have been accepted. In the end, he said the group decided against borrowing at such high rates ranging from 4.875 percent to 5.5 percent.

He pointed out that the rates were way above the average rate accepted on June 10, the last time the Treasury borrowed from the T-bill market.

Still, Mendiola noted that the rate of increase in yesterday's auction had slowed down compared to two weeks ago when the banks tried but failed to push the 91-day rate by 30.3 basis points and the one-year yield by 124.8 basis points.

Asked whether the market would blink first in the ongoing tiff with the

TREASURY/ B4

4.3% economic growth forecast for next year

By Doris C. Dumlao

GLOBAL think tank Consensus Economics Inc. has upgraded its economic growth outlook for the Philippines to 3.8 percent for this year and 4.3 percent for 2003 to factor in the strong turnaround in exports and robust domestic demand.

The latest economic outlook, which was cited by the quarterly Asia Economic Monitor report released by the Asian Development Bank yesterday, was better than the earlier projected 3.6 percent gross domestic product growth for this year and 4 percent for next year.

Consensus Economics is a private research firm which collates forecasts from economic and financial institutions across 70 countries around the world on a quarterly basis.

"Philippine GDP growth is forecast to improve from 3.2 percent last year to 3.8 percent in 2002, pushing GDP growth close to its historical trend," the report said.

Gov't sets value-based tax scheme for vehicles

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE DEPARTMENT of Trade and Industry has rejected the Japanese assemblers' plea to maintain the engine-based tax system as it revealed its plan to announce a shift to value-based taxation with the proposed reforms in the Motor Vehicle Development Program to be announced this month.

Industry Undersecretary Gregorio Domingo disclosed yesterday to automotive industry executives from Japan and Asean countries that the DTI has decided to proceed with the shift to peg a vehicle's tax on sticker price rather than engine size along with other reforms in the MVDP.

Philippine Automotive Federation Inc. president Vicente T. Mills said he was surprised by Domingo's announcement since previous discussions with the DTI had focused on adopting a mix of both price and engine in determining vehicle taxes.

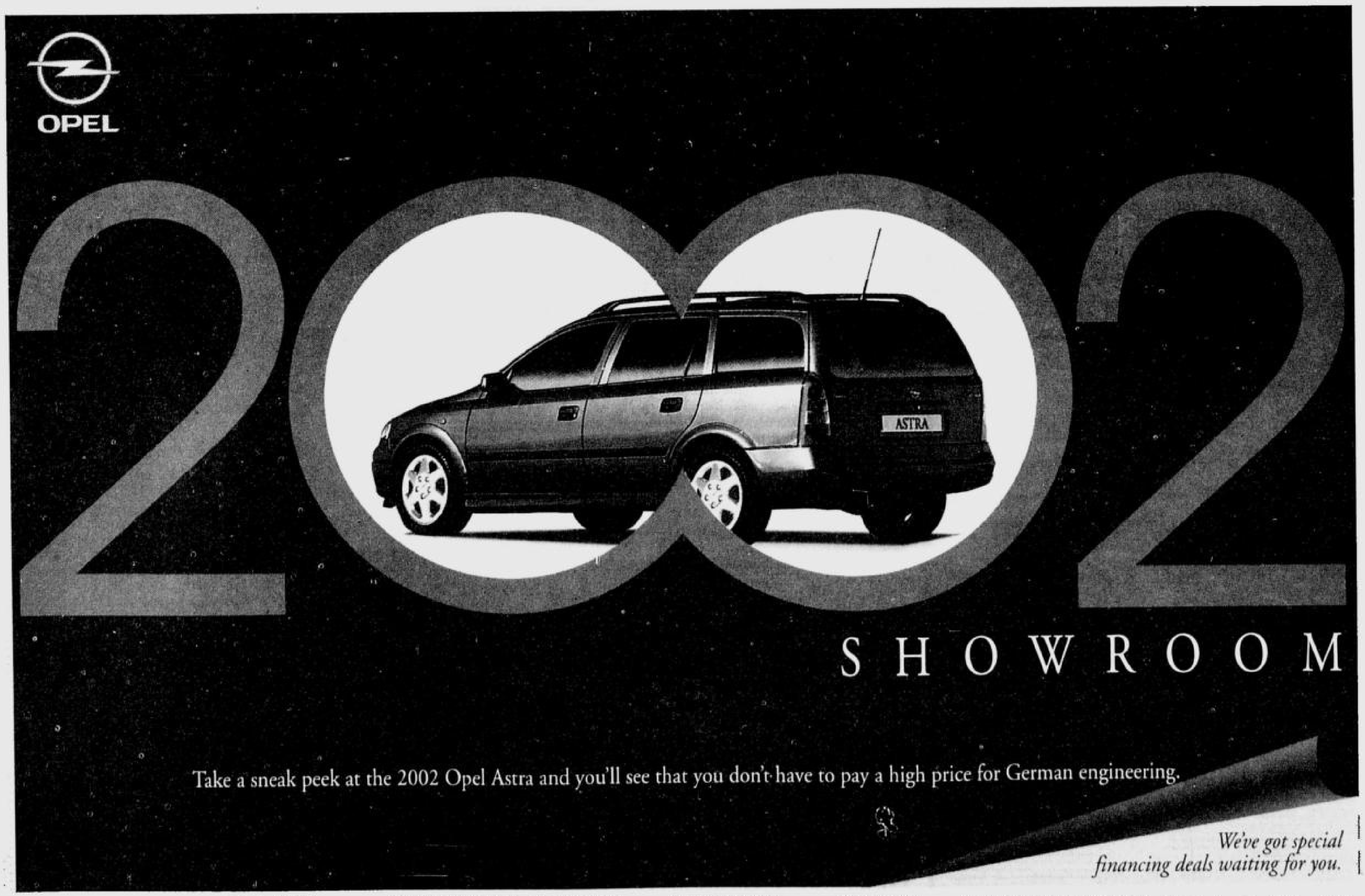
Mills said members of the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines Inc. (except for Ford Motor Co. Philippines Inc.) had earlier voted to push for a status quo on the engine-based tax system. Mills is also the president of Campi.

Ford has been the main driving force for the DTI's planned shift in taxation because it would allow the American car giant to price its gas-guzzling vehicles more aggressively versus its Japanese rivals. Since its re-entry into the Philippines in 1998, Ford has lagged behind Japanese assemblers in terms of sales and it has blamed the government's tax structure for unfair competition.

Mills said the Japanese assemblers felt the engine-based tax system had the least impact on government revenues and it was the most equitable because buyers of low-powered vehicles pay the least taxes.

In a position paper, Campi claimed a shift to price-based taxation would unduly penalize buyers of low-displacement vehicles such as Asian utility vehicles when the government wanted only to target the sport utility vehicles that avail themselves of the 10-seater tax ex-

GOVT/ B3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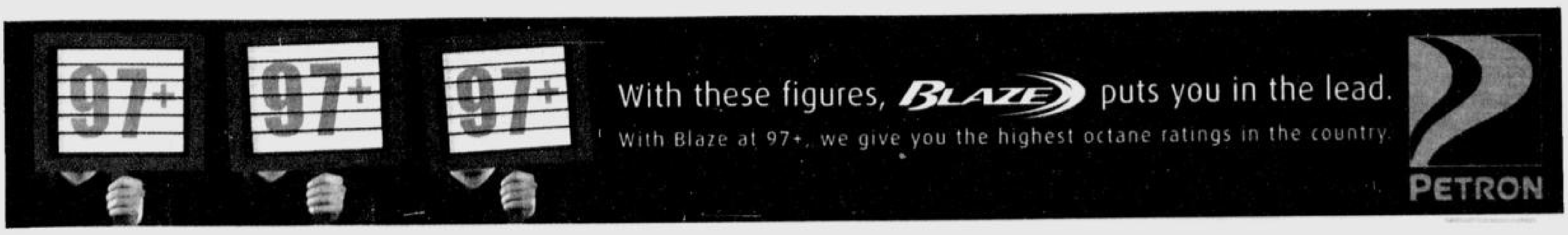
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PETRON

PLDT says debt-reduction effort on track despite acquisition bid

By Abigail L. Ho

PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Co. said the company was still making some progress in its liability management efforts despite uncertainties stemming from the deal between First Pacific Co. Ltd. and the Gokongwei group.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, PLDT corporate secretary Ma. Lourdes Rausa-Chan said PLDT's debt management program had been "proceeding well toward its completion prior to the announcement of the First Pacific-Gokongwei transaction."

Last week, credit rating agency Moody's Investors Service downgraded PLDT's outlook from stable to negative.

Rausa-Chan said the downgrade could have been a result of the "perceived delay" in the completion of the company's debt management activities, slowed by "uncertainties" from the deal between First Pacific and the Gokongweis.

However, she assured shareholders that the company was still on track with regard to managing its debt load.

"Management continues to pursue seriously our liability management program, of which certain key-components have already been put in place. Progress continues to be made on the remainder of PLDT's key financing initiatives, successful completion of which is expected over the next few months," Rausa-Chan added.

Last week, PLDT's share price dropped to an 11-year low of P307.50. It posted a slight rebound on Monday, closing at P315 a share. PLDT shares yesterday gained further, closing at P332.50.

"PLDT management's performance remains strong and positive notwithstanding the problems caused by First Pacific's intention to try and sell their shares to a competitor. We remain on track to hit our targets, not only for the second quarter, but for the full year of 2002," PLDT vice president for media and communications Menardo Jimenez Jr. said in a statement yesterday.

"There is very strong belief that the drop in share price was not only caused by the uncertainty created by First Pacific with regard to the future of PLDT. It is an equally strong statement against the entry of Gokongwei into the company," another PLDT source said.

Jardine Davies to pay ₱700M in dividends

By Doris C. Dumlao

CONSTRUCTION and agri-business conglomerate Jardine Davies Inc. is set to distribute more than P700 million worth of excess cash to shareholders through stock dividends that will be bought back by the company.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, Jardine Davies said its retained earnings of P31.6 million as of end-2001 was not sufficient to distribute the excess funds through outright cash dividends.

However, it said the accumulated cash could be distributed by way of excess capital by raising the company's authorized capital from P200 million to P910 million, out of which P702.13 million would be subscribed and paid in full through stock dividends.

"To date, the company has accumulated excess cash of more than P700 million. The cash is deposited as short-term deposits at local banks, earning interest at 3.5 percent (net of tax). The company does not have any external borrowing," the disclosure said.

The stock dividends to be declared will be equivalent to 400 percent of the issued and outstanding 43.88 million shares of the company.

Immediately following the approval of the increase, the company will decrease the authorized capital again from P910 million to P210 million and out of such reduction, the shares representing the stock dividends shall be cancelled in its books upon the approval by the Securities and Exchange Commission.

"In consideration for the cancellation of the stock dividend shares, the company shall pay the holders thereof P4 per share, amounting to a total of P702.13 million," the disclosure said.

As such, the disclosure said the distribution of excess capital would not have any net effect on the outstanding shares nor authorized capital. However, the transaction will reduce the company's additional paid-in capital and cash.

Jardine Davies is into the distribution of building and industrial materials, middle-income housing, agribusiness, and consumer finance. It has branches in major cities in the country including Cebu, Davao, Bacolod and Iloilo.

The company also has significant interests in the Philippine sugar industry through its equity in two sugar mills, both of which it manages and which account for about 7 percent of total Philippine sugar production. It is one of the largest distributors of pesticides and related products through Jardine Agchem.

Equitable sets expansion

EQUITABLE PCI Bank is set to open 24 more branches this year as part of an expansion program aimed at positioning itself for faster economic growth in the future, a senior bank official said.

Dennis B. Velasquez, senior vice president and retail banking group head, said that in addition to six opened in the first semester, the bank planned to set up 24 more new sites. This will strengthen its nationwide branch infrastructure and enable the bank to reach more customers in the capital and in the provinces.

"We have continuously pursued our branch expansion activities not only in Metro Manila but also in the provinces because we realize their strategic growth potentials, and we want to be an active partner in the development of these regions," Velasquez said.

"For example, in Cebu and Bacolod alone, our network of offices in these two provinces has enabled us to reach at least 33 important growth areas and their burgeoning markets," he said.

The bank also intends to expand its network of 440 onsite and offsite ATMs and expects to set up 30 more ATMs this year. Currently the only ATM network in the country that forms part of the BancNet, MegaLink, and ExpressNet consortiums, FASTeller ATM cardholders can easily gain access to over 4,000 ATMs nationwide.

It also expects to introduce "banking kiosks," the first of its kind in the bank's more than 50 years of operation. A take-off from its experiment with in-store branches, these banking kiosks will be manned by a complement of three people and will focus on selling basic retail banking products. These will be situated in selected areas in the metropolis such as malls and other public areas and will serve as expanded points of presence of the bank.

Velasquez said the bank has gained the confidence to expand because it was already done with its rationalization program, culling its network of those branch locations that are redundant. He said the bank wanted its distribution capacity to be ready as soon as the economy rebounds.

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APEXMINES
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NOTICE OF ANNUAL STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING

TO ALL STOCKHOLDERS:

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Annual Stockholders' Meeting of the Company will be held on July 31, 2002 at 9:00 in the morning at Valle Verde Country Club, Capt. Javier Street, Bo. Ugong, Pasig City to consider and take action upon the following matters:

1. Call to order;
2. Proof of Notice and Quorum;
3. Approval of the Minutes of the Stockholders' Meeting held on June 27, 2001;
4. Report of the President;
5. Presentation and approval of the Financial Statements as of December 31, 2001 embodied in the 2001 Annual Report;
6. Ratification of the acts of directors, committees and officers of the corporation;
7. Appointment of external auditors;
8. Election of directors;
9. Consideration of such other business as may properly come before the meeting;
10. Adjournment.

Only stockholders of record as of the close of business on July 1, 2002 will be entitled to attend and vote. Stockholders who cannot attend the meeting in person are requested to accomplish the attached proxy form and promptly return the same to the undersigned at least three (3) days before the scheduled time of the meeting.

A copy of SEC Form 17-A (Annual Report) of the Company will be provided free of charge upon written request addressed to:

ATTY. CLARENCE D. GUERRERO
Assistant Corporate Secretary
Apex Mining Co., Inc.
6th Floor Manilabank Building
Ayala Avenue, Makati City

Makati City, June 28, 2002.

By Order of the Board of Directors

LEONARDO S. GAYAO
Corporate Secretary

DISCLOSURES

ELECTED directors of **House of Investments Inc.** were Helen Dee, Basil Ong, Rizalino Navarro, Susanne Santos and Yvonne Yuchengco while Carlos Dominguez, Leonardo Alejandrino, Wilfrido Sanchez, Roberto de Ocampo, Kiat Bit Yu and Isabel Caro Wilson were elected independent directors. Also, the company merged with Honda Cars Quezon City Inc., Isuzu Manila Inc., Hi-Daiwa House Philippines Inc., Satellite Properties Estate Corp., Zamboanga Gold Mining Corp., Zamboanga Wood Products Inc. and Hi-Realty Corp. with House of Investments as the surviving company.

* * *

JARDINE Davies Inc. increased its authorized capital stock from P200 million to P 910 million. Out of this increase, P702.1 million will be subscribed and paid in full by way of stock dividend.

* * *

LA TONDEÑA Distillers Inc. bought 17,000 of its own shares at P32 per share.

* * *

THE LISTING of **Cityland Development Corp.'s** additional 328.8 million common shares was set for Wednesday, July 10.

* * *

KEPPEL Philippines Marine bought 150,000 of its own shares at P0.38 per shares and another 200,000 shares at P0.39 per share.

* * *

WILLIAM, Gothong & Aboitiz Inc. announced that two of its nominees for the election of its directors scheduled on July 12 have been changed. Replacing Jon Ramon Aboitiz and Erramon Aboitiz are Luis Aboitiz Jr. and Manuel Go.

* * *

ELECTED directors of **Prudential Bank** were Jose Santos, Francisco Delgado, Sonia Santos, A. Benedicto Santos, Roman Santos, Mario Santos Jr., Augusto Estrada, William Tiosic, Horacio Santos Jr. and Ezekiel Martinez.

* * *

PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Co. clarified that it cannot specify which factors have caused the decrease in its share price but it believes news regarding the transaction between First Pacific and the Gokongwei group has significantly affected investor sentiment in PLDT. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Tuesday, July 09, 2002)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17.75	17.75	17.75	17.75	9,500
Banco Filipino Sav & Mort	95	100	95	100	300
Bank of the Phil. Islands	45	46	44.5	46	115,200
China Banking Corp.	620	620	620	620	2,030
Citystate Savings Bank	14.25	14.25	14.25	14.25	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	29	29.5	29	29	253,400
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	33.5	34	33	34	274,000
Philippine National Bank	32	32	32	32	2,600
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	10	10.25	10	10.25	4,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	19.75	19.75	19.75	19.75	30,200
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Filipino Fund Inc.	0.195	0.195	0.195	0.195	20,000
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1045	1055	1045	1055	3,520
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.63	0.66	0.63	0.65	1,790,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	520	520	515	515	33,890
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.029	0.029	0.029	0.029	500,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03	500,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	440,000
Piltel	0.33	0.34	0.32	0.34	690,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	327.5	337.5	325	332.5	312,620
Ivantage Corp.	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	250,000
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.014	0.014	0.013	0.014	13,700,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	20.25	20.25	20.25	20.25	14,600
Manila Electric Co. B	28	28.5	27.5	28	186,400
Petron Corp.	1.7	1.72	1.7	1.72	524,000
Salcon Power Corp.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	58,241,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.14	1.14	1.14	1.14	3,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.42	2.44	2.42	2.44	272,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	90,000
William, Gothong & Aboitiz	2.32	2.32	2.32	2.32	51,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Alsons Cement Corp.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	50,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.34	2.34	2.34	2.34	20,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	12.75	12.75	12.75	12.75	11,700
RFM Corp.	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	100,000
San Miguel Corp. A	47.5	48	47.5	48	18,200
San Miguel Corp. B	53.5	54	53.5	53.5	69,900
Universal Robina Corp.	4.35	4.4	4.35	4.4	3,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	100,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	5.2	5.3	5.2	5.3	307,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.24	2.26	2.24	2.26	6,422,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	11.25	11.5	11.25	11.5	2,200
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	5,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.35	0.36	0.33	0.36	1,080,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	6,200,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.22	0.22	400,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.14	0.15	0.14	0.15	400,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	6,000
First Phil Hldgs. Corp.	19	19	18.25	18.5	644,300
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	420,000
Ionics Inc.	5.8	5.8	5.8	5.8	1,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.46	1.46	1.46	1.46	56,000
Jollivile Holdings Corp.	1.12	1.2	1.12	1.2	20,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.69	0.7	0.69	0.7	100,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.47	0.47	0.47	0.47	10,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.26	0.28	0.26	0.27	2,060,000
Music Corp.	0.17	0.2	0.17	0.19	150,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.81	0.81	0.8	0.8	200,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Corro-Coat Inc.	1.28	1.28	1.28	1.28	10,000
Interphil Labs Inc. A	0.66	0.66	0.66	0.66	110,000
Jardine Davies Inc.	30	30	30	30	1,000
Matsushita Elec Phil Corp.	5	5	5	5	36,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	10,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	250,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.46	0.46	0.46	0.46	150,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.34	0.35	0.34	0.34	1,000,000
Manila Jockey Club	8.5	8.5	8.5	8.5	8,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	23.75	24	23.75	24	141,000
Globe Telecom Hldg. (Pdr)	600	630	600	620	2,400
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	200
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	7	7	7	7	2,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.4	5.5	5.4	5.5	6,298,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	10,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	200,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	10,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.205	0.205	0.2	0.2	1,550,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.24	2.36	2.24	2.34	4,631,000
Highlands Prime Leisure	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	250,000
City & Land Developers	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	10,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.19	0.2	0.19	0.2	100,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	110,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.04	0.04	0.03	0.03	4,800,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.6	823,000
MINING					
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.185	0.185	0.185	0.185	10,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.195	0.195	0.195	0.195	40,000
Omico Corp.	0.0026	0.0026	0.0026	0.0026	1,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.015	0.015	0.015	0.015	5,000,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	2,000,000
Interport Res.	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	6,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	60,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	4,000,000
Pacifica	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	1,000,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	300,000
South China Resources Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	60,000

CURRENCIES

July 9, 2002

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.011225	1.000000	50.4950
Japan	Yen	0.008533	0.008438	0.4261
United Kingdom	Pound	1.557185	1.539900	77.7573
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.129646	0.128207	6.4738
Switzerland	Franc	0.680502	0.672948	33.9805
Canada	Dollar	0.664143	0.656771	33.1637
Singapore	Dollar	0.574722	0.568343	28.6985
Australia	Dollar	0.570025	0.563698	28.4639
Bahrain	Dinar	2.682436	2.652661	133.9461
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.269660	0.266667	13.4654
Brunei	Dollar	0.569383	0.563063	28.4319
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000113	0.000112	0.0057
Thailand	Baht	0.024420	0.024149	1.2194
UAE	Dirham	0.275343	0.272287	13.7491
Korea	Won	0.000853	0.000844	0.0426
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.988900	49.9345
Brazil	Real	0.354318	0.350385	17.6927
Denmark	Kroner	0.134534	0.133041	6.7179
India	Rupee	0.020747	0.020517	1.0360
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.266147	0.263193	13.2899
Mexico	New Peso	0.102025	0.100893	5.0946
New Zealand	Dollar	0.495407	0.489908	24.7379
Norway	Kroner	0.136868	0.135349	6.8344
Pakistan	Rupee	0.016848	0.016661	0.8413
South Africa	Rand	0.100012	0.098902	4.9941
Sweden	Kroner	0.108935	0.107726	5.4396
Syria	Pound	0.019673	0.019455	0.9824
Taiwan	NT Dollar	0.030358	0.030021	1.5159
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000751	0.000743	0.0375

Benpres to resume debt payments in Nov., CFO says

BENPRES Holdings Corp. said yesterday it was likely to resume interest payments on its debts in November this year as part of the firm's debt restructuring program.

Benpres has failed to pay interest on its long-term commercial paper and euro notes since June.

The company is still negotiating the terms of its debt restructuring plan with creditors and expects the talks to intensify in the next two months, Angel Ong, Benpres chief financial officer, said in a written response to a questionnaire by Reuters.

"There is however, a program for a resumption of interest payments starting November this year. As reported to our shareholders last June, the balance sheet management plan treats all obligations pari passu (equally ranked)," Ong said.

"We hope to complete the restructuring by the middle of next year."

Benpres is set to start paying interest on $189 million worth of obligations starting November this year, with payments delivered every six months for the next 10 years.

Benpres' total debt amounts to $600 million, $189 million of which is owed directly and $407.8 million is indirect debt through subsidiaries.

The company was also reported to be selling a portion of its stakes in subsidiaries ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp., cable television Beyond Cable, infrastructure firm Manila North Tollways Corp. and property firm Rockwell Land Corp.

"We don't want to pre-empt the outcome of ongoing discussions with respect to the sale of assets," Ong said when asked about the sale of its subsidiaries.

The company earlier said it was looking for a new investor for its water subsidiary Maynilad Water to obtain fresh funds to be used as its counterpart for a $350 million loan facility. ***Reuters***

First Pacific and MVP: Gloves are off

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

EXPECT more embarrassing press leaks and more court cases in the PLDT-Fort Bonifacio takeover fight.

The message from the Hong Kong grapevine is that First Pacific has decided to take the gloves off in handling its recalcitrant "manager," Manuel V. Pangilinan, in the wake of PLDT suing its controlling Hong Kong shareholder.

First Pacific Co. is scheduled to hold a special meeting today with its lawyers, apparently with or without MVP, to address the PLDT suit filed in New York last week. The next meeting of the First Pacific board, which meets quarterly, is scheduled for Sept. 2.

The New York suit has placed MVP in a most peculiar situation, since he has his feet planted on both sides of the fence. MVP, being the president/CEO of Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., is suing its parent shareholder First Pacific, where MVP is the executive chair.

According to the Hong Kong grapevine, the relation between First Pacific and MVP is now being likened to that of Vivendi-Universal and its recently dismissed ex-chair, Jean-Marie Messier, who earned the ire of his shareholders over the more $30 billion in debts the French conglomerate has piled up through aggressive acquisitions, ironically also of media and telecom companies.

Insuring confidentiality

AND speaking of PLDT, president/CEO Manuel V. Pangilinan has made corporate governance a crusade; instead of speaking on corporate social responsibility at last week's AIM forum on the same subject, MVP instead segued into his favorite subject before dodging off waiting reporters who wanted specifics, not motherhood statements.

But if you look at the PLDT annual reports since MVP first took over in late 1998, the annual filings contain less and less disclosures, specifically in regard to related party transactions.

For instance, in the 1999 annual report, covering the first full year of MVP's reign, PLDT disclosed that it had paid Malayan Insurance, now controlled by PLDT director Helen Yuchengco-Dee, P458.3 million in insurance premiums in 1998 and P374.6 million in 1999.

The following year, the 2000 report no longer identified by name the insurance companies, although it still disclosed the amount of the business.

The 2001 report was even more economical. It eliminated the entry altogether.

"Transactions with other companies entered in the ordinary course of business in which some of our directors may have an interest are not material," the 2001 report explained.

Even Ateneo's Fr. Bienvenido Nebres, a supposedly independent PLDT director, has apparently taken a monk's vow of silence in regard to the issue.

Ditto with ex-auditor, now SSS president Corazon de la Paz, despite the stinging memo of another PLDT director, Ambassador to Washington Albert del Rosario, describing PLDT's conduct of insurance business as "anomalous."

A P10-M dream car

THERE is always room at the top.

This seems to be the marketing motto of BMW as it launches its limo-like BMW 745 Li in the local market for P10.86 million, insurance and driver excluded.

Heck, for that amount, one can buy a two-bedroom flat in one of the better condos of Legaspi Village or 10 Honda Civics plus gasoline allowance for the whole year.

The German executives of the local BMW have actually been holding a series of select viewings at the Enterprise Tower, with the former DBS branch having been transformed as a private viewing room for the most gizmo-laden car today.

And for those suffering from temporary liquidity problem, the 735 Li (less options, smaller engine displacement) is available for P9 million, insurance and driver also excluded.

BMW is pleasantly surprised that it has so far managed to sell 15 of the short wheel-based 7 variant, with prices ranging from P8 million to P9 million, it introduced in February.

(You could catch a glimpse of these famous Bimmers and other expensive toys Friday and Saturday nights, scooting about in Ayala Center, The Fort, or Rockwell, with their roguish drivers and their hot dates.)

Which goes to show that there seems to be a number of charmed fellows in this small town who manage to make money, crisis or no crisis.

U-turn

AN unfortunate typo on the spelling of Gancayco, Balasbas and Associates (Cocktales, 08 July 2002), where a "u" found its way after the first "s," has created a most embarrassing situation for both the lady lawyer concerned and this space.

Frankly we do not know how the extra letter wormed its way into the column. Our guess is that it was a subliminal message, a projection?, triggered by the subject client, and not by the counsel.

Nevertheless, our most sincere apologies to Ms Balasbas and her law firm.

Heard through the grapevine

UP Prof. Soledad Cagampang-de Castro is being accused of taking the law in her own hands.

The senior UP Law teacher allegedly ordered the demolition, after sale negotiations had collapsed, of the cement wall of her neighbors Henry and Jojo Zabarte that had encroached on the Cagampang-de Castro property in Talimaya, Nasugbu, Batangas.

Worse, the UP prof allegedly even took over and fenced-off three power generators of the Zabartes.

De Castro's law office is at the LTA building in Legaspi Village, whose tenants include Villaraza and Angangco law firm and First Gentleman Mike Arroyo. *(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)*

Govt . . .

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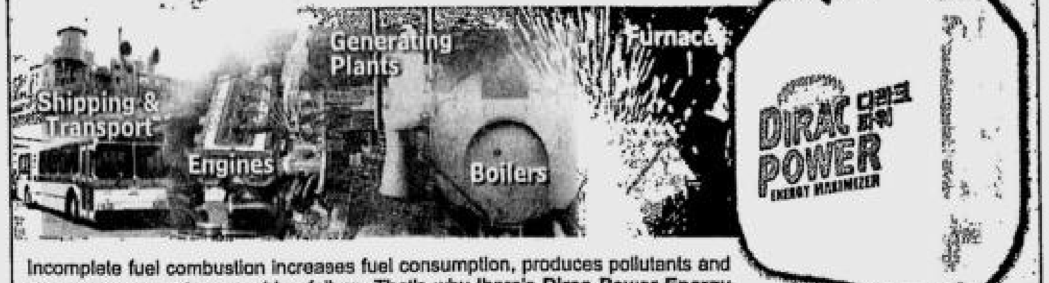
emption. Mills said Campi might meet again to come up with its position on the DTI move.

Campi warned that the shift to price-based valuation would lead to constant price changes due to foreign exchange rate fluctuations unlike the current engine-based tax system where the taxes paid would be fixed regardless of the peso-dollar level. Campi also said the tax reform was very drastic and applicable to developed countries where the currency and economic environment were very stable.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Malacañang urged to rescind Naia-3 deal

By Abigail L. Ho

THE MAIA-NAIA Association of Service Operators (Maso) has appealed to President Macapagal-Arroyo to rescind the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3 contract, not only because of its allegedly "onerous provisions" but also because of the internal squabble between the contractor's two major shareholders.

The Naia-3 contract is currently under renegotiation. However, Maso chair Perfecto Yasay Jr., in a briefing yesterday, said the cancellation of the contract was more appropriate.

"A renegotiation is done on the predicate that the contract is, in the first place, legal and that the government just wants better terms. But it is highly onerous and grossly disadvantageous to the government, so rescinding it is the only way for the government to go," he said.

Maso president Jovino Lorenzo added that German airport operator Fraport AG and the Cheng Family, the major shareholders of Naia-3 contractor Philippine International Air Terminals Co. Inc., were at opposite ends of the pole with regard to the government's move to renegotiate the contract.

"Fraport is willing to sit down with the government and renegotiate but the Chengs are not cooperating. In fact, they have taken an adversarial position in this issue. They won't even answer the 28-point letter that (Presidential Adviser for Strategic Projects) Gloria Tan-Climaco sent them in March," he said.

He added that since Piatco's shareholders themselves could not agree with each other, the government's renegotiation efforts with the contractor could end in a stalemate.

'So it would be better for the government to rescind the contract as early as now," Lorenzo said.

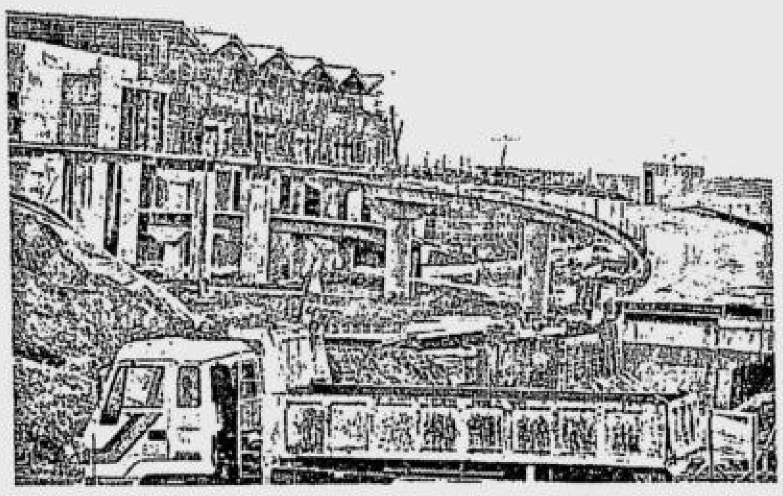
Two weeks ago, in Fraport's first annual general meeting since it went public last year, the German firm informed its shareholders that there would be no additional financial exposure in Piatco "until a mutually satisfactory concession agreement has been forged with the government," Lorenzo said.

He attended the stockholders' meeting in Frankfurt, Germany, as a common shareholder with $4,000 worth of Fraport shares.

Although Fraport will no longer infuse more money into the Naia-3 project, its single biggest offshore investment, the German firm affirmed its commitment to the Philippines by saying that it would not pull out of the country.

"It will stay and keep its investments in the Philippines. There was no justification to pull out," Lorenzo added.

"All these efforts of Maso only shows utter desperation. They're saying that construction has stopped or will stop when, in fact, it is still very much in full swing," Piatco spokesperson Moises Tolentino said in reaction to Maso's statements.



NAIA-3 is scheduled to open in December but without fresh infusion from the German partner, construction may have to stop.

Workers back Roxas position on cement tariff

WORKERS belonging to the unions of local cement manufacturing plants yesterday supported Trade and Industry Secretary Mar Roxas' decision to continue the imposition of provisional tariffs on imported cement, saying the move would not only save their jobs but also insure the stability of cement prices.

"Secretary Roxas is correct in upholding the tariffs because safeguards benefit not only the industry and its workers but all sectors of the society," the Philippine Cement Workers Council said.

"Since the imposition of the P20.60 per bag provisional tariff, retail prices of cement declined from P147 per bag to P125 per bag on the average, despite the fact that import levels have gone down," said Samuel Eslava, secretary general of PCWC.

"This means that imports have not really helped stabilize prices, contrary to the claims of the importers and contractor-importers," he added.

"Greed for super profits may have overwhelmed the importers who tried to prey on the local industry by dumping imports into the country. Despite the fact that they source their supplies abroad at very low prices, importers sold their stocks locally at prices even higher than those of locally manufactured cement," Eslava said.

The Court of Appeals recently issued a writ of preliminary injunction preventing the DTI from implementing an earlier recommendation of the Tariff Commission that denied the local cement companies' petition for safeguards against import surges. This meant the continued imposition of the temporary P20.60 per bag tariff on imported cement imposed last year by the DTI.

The injunction was sought by the Philippine Cement Manufacturers Corp. (Philcemcor) on behalf of the local cement manufacturers.

With the court injunction, Roxas said the government would continue the collection of the provisional tariff despite the fact that the original DTI order was to lapse last June 28. "Everything is on hold so the provisional tariff applies," Roxas told reporters after receiving a copy of the resolution.

Vehicle sales in Asean seen to double in '05

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

VEHICLE manufacturers and assemblers in Asean are projecting the doubling of their sales to over 2 million units in 2005 from 1.1 million in 2001 as the region gears up to compete with China in attracting automotive investments.

Aishah Ahmad, president of Asean Automotive Federation (AAF), said the Asean automotive industry had slowly but steadily recovered from the Asian financial crisis as sales already picked up in 2001.

During discussions at the 4th Conference on Asean Auto Supporting Industries, Ahmad said the AAF had projected sales to surge to over 2 million by 2005 when the region's major economies were expected to reach stable growth.

"The growth of the automotive industry is dependent not only on economic growth but also on government policy. This is why the government should encourage their industries to go on a regional scale rather than the domestic market," Ahmad said. The Philippine market is the smallest among Asean 4 (which includes Thailand, Indonesia, and Malaysia) with less than 10 percent of the region's annual sales.

Philippine Automotive Federation Inc. president Vicente Mills said the projected 2 million-a-year sales turnover in Asean should make the region competitive with the market base of China which currently has a turnover of between one million and 1.5 million units yearly. Mills said it was important for Asean to achieve economies of scale by having a big market base in order to compete with China in terms of production costs.

The entry of China into the World Trade Organization has led to fears that investments intended for Asean would be diverted to Mainland China because of its cheap labor, broad population base and growing income. But Jetro chair Noboru Hatakeyama noted that while Japan investments in China have surged 49 percent last year, Japan investments to Asean also grew 19 percent and were bigger in terms of value.

Mills does not see China-made vehicles (except for motorcycles) becoming a factor in the Asean in the near to medium term because he believed that Chinese assemblers would initially focus on building their market base before branching out overseas.

Mills said the region would continue to have a significant portion of automotive investments coming from the United States, Europe and Japan into Asia because Asean remains competitive in terms of labor quality. He stressed that labor was not only about cost but also the level of worker skills where Asean has a competitive edge over China. "Asean labor is on a higher value chain than China which we should continue to develop in the future," Mills said.

Mills said China was not only a threat but also an opportunity for Asean parts makers in terms of market for their products. He said Asean parts makers should step up their sales to China while that country was still forming a strong foundation for automotive manufacturing.

NISSAN MOTOR CHIEF IN RP
Nissan Motor Co. Ltd. president and CEO Carlos Ghosn observes plant operations at Nissan Motor Philippines Inc.'s manufacturing facility in Sta. Rosa, Laguna. NMPI head Jack H.F. Wu accompanied Ghosn during the plant tour on July 8. Nissan Motor Philippines Inc. distributes the Nissan Cefiro, Nissan Sentra Exalta, Nissan Verita and the Nissan Serena Q-RV.

UOB completes buyout, readies capital increase

UNITED Overseas Bank Ltd., Singapore's largest private bank, formally acquired the remaining Filipino shareholdings in United Overseas Bank Philippines last Friday.

The Singapore bank is now preparing the infusion of more funds into UOBP to reposition its local operations, support its growth and capitalize on market opportunities.

"The agreement was beneficial to all the parties and certainly to UOBP which can now concentrate on building up its business as a commercial bank," the Singaporean and Filipino partners said in a joint statement.

Both parties said they were satisfied with the terms of the agreement. No details were given.

UOBL said its resulting 100-percent ownership of the local bank gave it a free hand in running UOBP. "It certainly encourages us to put in more money into the bank because we want our local operations to be a strong integral part of our regional expansion strategy."

It added that the bank would aggressively address the weaknesses in its loan portfolio and operations.

Under the agreement, part of the settlement proceeds would be used to repay loans related to the previous shareholders. The Filipino partners would also help UOBP in the collection of P1.4 billion in past due loans. These loans were acquired from Westmont Bank, UOBP's predecessor.

"We want UOBP to be one of the most stable banks in the local banking system, with enough capitalization and a healthy loan portfolio. We will also be more aggressive in our marketing position henceforth," UOBP said.

After the acquisition, UOBP will now be a wholly owned foreign bank with one of the largest branch networks operating locally. The 100-percent ownership by a foreign group is now allowed under the General Banking Act of 2000.

Call centers not a wrong choice, says BOI exec

TRADE and Industry Undersecretary and Board of Investments managing head Gregory Domingo disputed the claim of STI president and CEO Chito Salazar that the government's strategy to focus on the call center industry was "myopic."

"I acknowledge the claim that call centers have been prioritized by the DTI. However, I dispute the claim that the choice is wrong," said Domingo.

While recognizing that call **centers** give high salaries to their employees, Salazar criticized the DTI for emphasizing call center operations instead of other ventures that entail more value-added services in ICT.

According to Domingo, call center operations in the Philippines entail high-end operations of the business. "The type of call center activity that is done in the Philippines focuses more on the high-end and more complicated part of the business," he said.

Domingo explained that Philippine call centers were doing financial work, helpdesk and other similar services that required "very well educated agents." "The skills required of these agents, in many cases, exceed those required of programmers," he said citing the example of call center agents having to be trained in the United States and having to take exams that the US law requires from those who deal with securities with customers.

The BOI managing head added that the Philippines has an advantage over **other** countries in operating call centers because of the local labor force's proficiency in English and adaptability to Western culture, hence, giving the best value for money anywhere in the world. "It is imperative for the Philippines to promote this industry as best as we can while the conditions are ripe for us to take advantage of it," Domingo asserted.

DTI has identified four key areas within ICT for promotion namely, customer contact centers, business process outsourcing (BPO), software development, and content development. BPOs are the back office operations of multinationals that provide finance, accounting, human resource and other services for their regional or global offices. Content development refers to activities such as animation and data transcription/conversion. According to Domingo, the four areas are listed in the order of priority based on determination of potential readiness, and competitive advantage.

The Board of investments and the Philippine Economic Zone Authority have approved more than P3.1 billion worth of investments for the first five months of the year, with more than 10,740 jobs to be generated from these investments. Of the projects approved from January to May 2002, six were call centers, 13 were software development projects, two engineering design projects, and one each for animation and shared services. The others are involved in cyber retailing, data entry services, learning institutions, digital music production and electronic data discovery.

Close to 30 call centers are now operating in the Philippines doing mostly inbound calls. Thirteen companies are offering shared financial services; 42 companies are engaged in software development; 38 in engineering design; 13 in animation, and 14 in data transcription. Since last year, a total of P17 billion was infused to the Philippine economy by the ICT industry.

Treasury . . .

From page B1

Treasury, Mendiola simply pointed to the excess liquidity that banks sustained after the government paid out about P8 billion worth of maturities in recent weeks, the time when their treasury bids were fully rejected.

"They are trying to challenge us but there is excess liquidity and there are still no other outlets for them. It's not a matter of blinking first but it's the reasonableness of their bids," the treasury official said.

A trader from a foreign bank noted, however, that the government was bound to give in following its swollen budget gap. As of May, the government deficit had grown to P107.5 billion or about 83 percent of the P130-billion target for the year.

Mendiola stressed that it was "too soon" to worry about the deficit particularly when the five-month budget gap had already been fully financed.

"The government is firm in its resolve to meet the P130-billion deficit and given this assurance, this means that the Treasury needs only to finance about P23 billion for the rest of the year. We don't need the money," he said.

The treasury official noted that the government was even planning to reduce its borrowing from the fixed-income market. The treasury bill size should have gone up by P500 million starting this month but this was cancelled.

The auction size for the fourth quarter, Mendiola said, was also being reviewed.

The auction committee would sell P3 billion worth of three-year papers. Mendiola said the government would not accept bids whose rates would exceed 10.75 percent.

GOINGS-ON

SEC seminar postponed

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission has postponed indefinitely an investor information seminar earlier scheduled on July 12 in Baguio due to bad weather.

The SEC also said it was also postponing indefinitely its July 26 seminar in Legaspi City.

3-in-1 Income Earner

INSULAR Life has introduced a new product that incorporates life insurance, savings and investment protection.

Income Earner is a new plan for "risk-averse" investors, Insular Life assistant vice president and product management head Patricia de Vera said.

"It is both an insurance protection and investment plan that guarantees life insurance and disability benefits with the disability rider, a limited premium payment period, and guaranteed cash benefits even before the maturity of the policy," De Vera said.

With Income Earner, plan holders will only have to invest a level premium for 10 years, after which they get a percentage of the face amount of their plan starting at the end of the 11th year and every year thereafter until the end of the 20th year.

GG & A Club Shares

SEC License Broker #007575 * As of July 10, 2002

CLUB	BUYER	SELLER
Alabang Country Club "A" (Filipino)	1,500,000	1,650,000
Alabang Country Club "B" (Foreigner)	-	2,000,000
Baguio Country Club	700,000	740,000
Calatagan Golf Club "A"	75,000	85,000
Calatagan Golf Club "B"	-	110,000
Camp John Hay	275,000	Please Call
Canlubang	500,000	600,000
Canyonwoods	Please Call	200,000
Capitol Hills	-	115,000
Celebrity Sports Club	-	180,000
Eagle Ridge "A"/"B"/"C"	Please Call	Please Call
Eastridge "A"	-	200,000
Evercrest "A"	-	100,000
Forest Hills "A"	200,000	220,000
Forest Hills "B"	230,000	250,000
Forest Hills "C"	250,000	260,000
Makati Sports Club "A"	250,000	280,000
Makati Sports Club "B"	225,000	-
Manila Golf (Corporate)	-	14,000,000
Manila Golf (Individual)	10,000,000	14,000,000
Manila Polo	2,750,000	2,850,000
Manila Southwoods "A"	Please Call	650,000
Manila Southwoods "B"	730,000	800,000
Metropolitan Club "A"	-	120,000
Metropolitan Club "B"	-	150,000
Montemar (Individual)	30,000	40,000
Montemar (Corp)	50,000	-
Mt. Malarayat (Corporate)	500,000	550,000
Orchard Golf Club "A"/"B"/"C"	Please Call	Please Call
Pueblo de Oro "A"/"B"/"C"	-	Please Call
Puerto Azul	-	125,000
Quezon City Sports Club	200,000	220,000
Riviera Golf & Country Club "A"	-	Please Call
Rockwell	350,000	450,000
Sherwood Hills "A"	-	100,000
Sta. Elena "A"	1,625,000	1,700,000
Sta. Elena "B"	-	2,100,000
Subic Bay Yacht (Corporate)		280,000
Subic Bay Yacht (Individual)	-	170,000
Tagaytay Country Club	400,000	450,000
Tagaytay Highlands	820,000	875,000
Tagaytay Midlands	800,000	-
The Country Club	Please Call	Please Call
Valle Verde (Individual)	-	170,000
Valle Verde (Corporate)	-	330,000
Valley Golf	250,000	-
Wack-Wack Golf Club	6,800,000	7,300,000

PLAYING RIGHTS (Available Lessors)

Alabang "A"	25,000	Mimosa Golf	25,000
Calatagan "A"	10,000	Orchard "A"	30,000
Canlubang	60,000	Riviera "A"	15,000
Eagleridge	15,000	Sta. Elena	60,000
Eastridge "A"	20,000	Tagaytay CC	20,000
Forest Hills	30,000	Tagaytay Golf	45,000
Manila Southwoods	20,000	Tagaytay Mid.	35,000
Makati Sports "A"	25,000	Valley Golf	20,000
Manila Golf	300,000	Wack-Wack	90,000

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Corporate profits rise amid Wall Street slump

NEW YORK—Any which way you slice it, it's likely that Corporate America's second quarter financial scorecards will show some improvement.

But hold the bubbly, analysts say.

Corporate profits are creeping up—but at a still-tepid growth rate that's unlikely to be the harbinger of greatly improved earnings for the current quarter and beyond. And, experts say, it won't be much help for stock market investors.

"At the start of the second quarter, we said, 'Enjoy the second quarter numbers, but don't enjoy them too much'," said Chuck Hill, director of research at market researcher Thomson First Call. "They will be strong but will not give a big indication of what's coming in the second half."

Quarterly earnings reports kick into high gear in mid-July, with profits for companies in the Standard & Poor's 500 index expected to rise 3 percent for the April to June period, according to First Call.

While this is nothing to get excited about, it handily beats the first quarter, when earnings fell 11.5 percent compared with year-earlier results and the year-ago second quarter when they were down 17 percent.

"We think the second quarter sequentially or year-over-year would be up. On a year-on-year basis, that will be the first up quarter after five consecutive down ones," Hill said.

But many investors now are wondering how trustworthy the numbers being reported by companies are in the first place, as corporate accounting scandals have hit marquee names such as telecom giant WorldCom Inc. and other big companies.

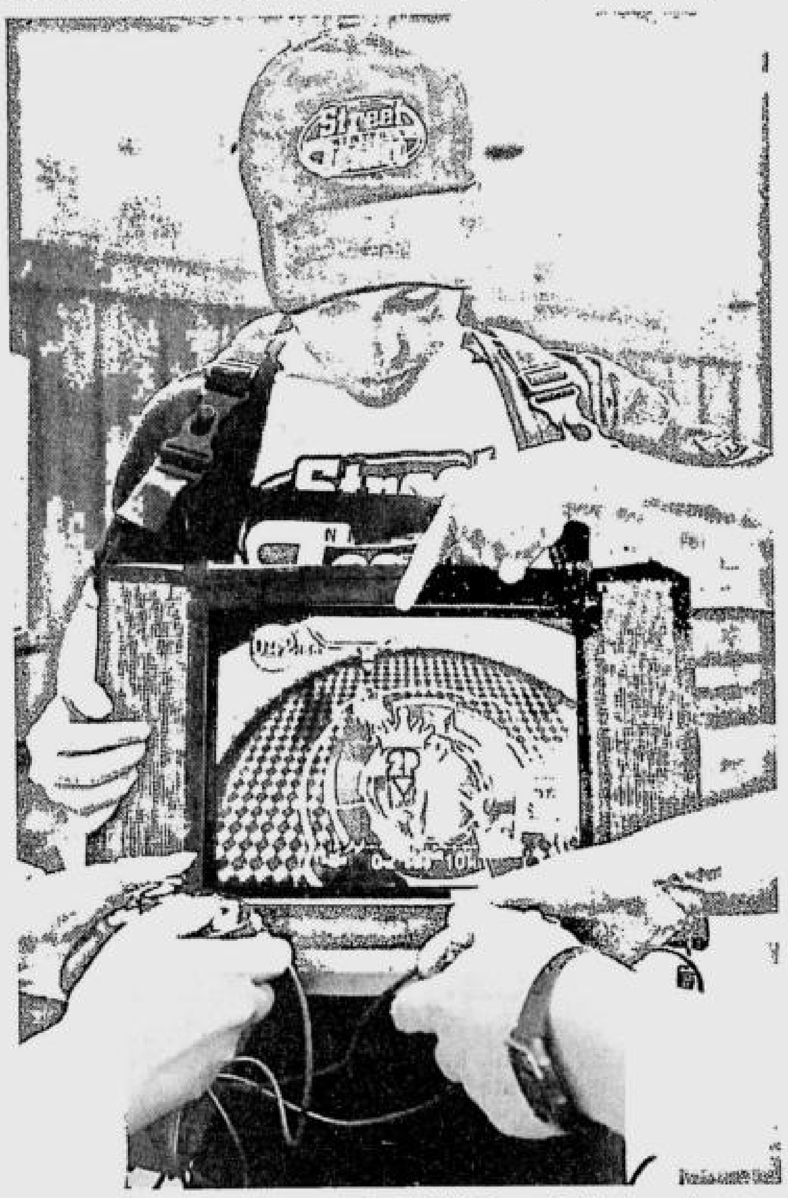
"That is huge. Even if earnings are strong, does the market pay for them? That will continue to weigh on the market for a while," said Michael Kayes, chief investment officer at Eastover Capital Management, which oversees $300 million. "It will take a long time to rebuild trust."

The crisis of confidence, coupled with fears that profit growth would be soggy, pushed Wall Street deep into bear market territory. Stocks may remain under a cloud if economic recovery, as a rising number of pundits expect, runs at a much slower clip than the rapid 5.8-percent pace set in early 2002.

Conventional wisdom on Wall Street has it that the profits picture would dramatically improve this year as rock-bottom interest rates and tax cuts boost the economy and the corporate bottom line. This was supposed to whisk stock indexes like the tech-laden Nasdaq composite and the S&P 500 from the multiyear lows where they are languishing.

Not all subscribe to this point of view. A sustained rally would need a drastic improvement in earnings to materialize, says Charles Payne, market analyst at Wall Street Strategies.

"The economy is definitely improving, but it's not accelerating. I think that might be bothering a few people," said Payne, referring to the latest stock sell-off. "This market is in such serious turmoil that we really need a series of blockbuster numbers to turn it around." *Reuters*



NINTENDO "Human Interactive Unit" Steve Pelletier points to a possible target on one of Nintendo's newest games at the company's headquarters in Redmond, Washington. Pelletier is one of dozens of young people Nintendo has hired for the summer to train on its latest games and then walk through shopping malls wearing them for shoppers to test. AP

Gray matter key to Russia's future for tech tycoon

MOSCOW—Unlike most of his peers, this leading Russian businessman shuns bodyguards, owns no villa on the Cote d'Azur and enjoys an unblemished reputation for probity.

Anatoly Karachinsky is nevertheless a Russian high-flyer, head of the country's largest IT company and a pioneer in an area where Russia has yet to make an impact.

Last month, he was named on a list of 50 "stars of Europe" drawn up by the magazine Business Week, the first Russian to gain this distinction, which he shared with President Vladimir Putin's economic adviser, Andrei Illarionov.

As founder-president of the IBS (Information Business System) group, he believes Russia's future lies not in black gold—the huge oil reserves that form the bedrock of its economy at present—but in gray matter: the intellectual prowess of its people and its capacity to develop new information technologies.

"In the world of computers, and for IBS in particular, everything changed totally with (the) Sept. 11 (attacks in the United States)," Karachinsky told AFP.

"The continuing tensions in the Middle East and in the Indian sub-continent have changed things around in Russia's favor. Dozens of major international groups which traditionally sought programming skills in India or Asia have started contacting us."

Apart from being geographically closer to the West, Russia has a number of substantial advantages, Karachinsky said, citing a "highly qualified and cheap labor market" and programmers "well-known for their creativity and ability to find original solutions." *AFP*

Life still tough for China's farmers

WUWEI, China—A full 20 years after the late patriarch Deng Xiaoping pushed through the decollectivization of China's countryside, farmers in the rural reform laboratory of Anhui province say working the land alone is not enough for them to survive.

"It's very tough, and without the help of my husband's work on a construction site, we could not get by," admitted Wang Xiuyang, 35, whose sun-weathered face makes her look closer to 50.

Like everyone from her village in the Wuwei district of the relatively poor eastern province, Wang works in the paddy fields and farms cotton, sometimes putting in 15-hour days before collapsing to sleep.

The cultivation of her six fields with help from her father and two children brings in no more than 2,000 yuan ($240) a year, of which more than 300 yuan goes to fertilizer and pesticide and 700 yuan on various taxes.

Taxes are a burden for everyone in her village, Huazhuang, and like in many places in rural China, they are both highly variable and levied for all manner of reasons.

These range from road building and the right to raise pigs, sheep or even chickens, to a tax on the construction or improvement of homes. On top of this are six-monthly school fees of around 130 to 180 yuan per child.

Anhui has been the testing ground over the past two decades for a large number of rural reforms designed to both improve farmers' lives and make them more responsive to market demands.

But despite these initiatives, as well as a national campaign launched last year by Premier Zhu Rongji to reduce the number of taxes levied, villagers are far from content.

Taxes and fees are still imposed arbitrarily, they say.

After a drop of 50 yuan last year—following a visit by Vice Premier Wen Jiabao—school fees have risen again while the bulk of taxes were kept in place.

"Some officials don't hesitate to issue false (tax) receipts to avoid trouble from the authorities," said one of Wang's neighbors, a plain-speaking man in his 40s. *AFP*

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Teenagers face danger working summer jobs

OHIO—For millions of teens, summer is about more than making tracks to the beach. It's when they flood the job market, exposing themselves to the rewards of the workplace—and its dangers.

The first thing on their mind is money. The last thing may be safety.

More than 500 teenagers are injured at work everyday on average. About one is killed every five days. And some companies are not doing enough to tell teens how to stay safe or to keep them out of harm's way.

Brad Hurtig, a 17-year-old football star, was a few hours into his first shift at an Ohio metal stamping company last month when he got his hands caught in a power press. Both had to be amputated.

Adam Carey had worked at a country club north of Boston for barely a month when the golf cart he was driving slammed into a wooden deck, crushing his chest.

At 16, too young to be driving even a golf cart under Massachusetts law, Carey was one of 73 teens killed on the job in 2000.

His mother, Maggie, wishes she'd paid more attention to the fact that he was driving.

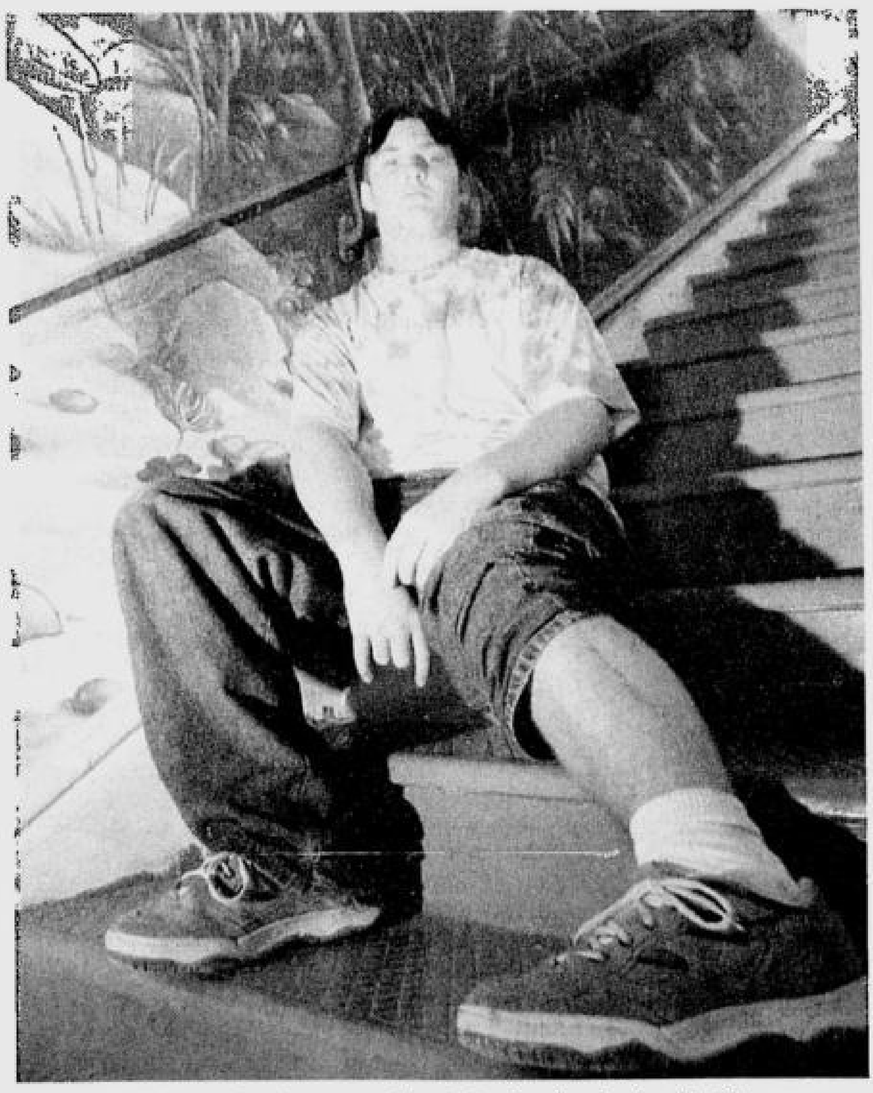
"We assumed that that was an acceptable thing for him to do," she said. "Being a kid, he certainly didn't sit down and read the laws."

And if the club told him to drive, she said he would have done it regardless. Now she urges friends to know what their kids do at work, to know the law and not to assume the employer is looking out for their children.

The Labor Department says about 4 million 15- to 17-year-olds earn paychecks during summer vacation. Eight in 10 teens will work at some point during high school.

The National Consumers League advocacy group says the most dangerous jobs for young people are:

- Driving and delivery, including operating or repairing motorized equipment.
- Working alone, and late at night, in businesses where money is exchanged.
- Cooking, with exposure to hot oil and grease, hot water and steam, and hot cooking surfaces.
- Construction and working at heights.
- Traveling youth crews: groups of children recruited to sell candy, magazine subscriptions and other items in neighborhoods and on street corners.



ANDREW Britton sits by a mural he helped paint in the Ely Chapman Education Center in Marietta, Ohio. Britton spent three days in the hospital last summer after he slipped off a trash trailer on his second day at work and slashed his leg, suffering nerve damage and requiring 30 stitches. Some employers don't do all they could to keep teens safe, and many young people are unprepared, too focused on getting paid to grasp that they could be hurt or killed. AP

At a fast-food restaurant near Youngstown, Ohio, a teen was burned after the boss insisted he dump the contents of a deep fryer into a plastic bucket, a state official said. The bucket melted, releasing hot grease that melted the boy's shoes and caused him to fall into it.

Judy Elliott, who runs the New Hampshire Coalition for Occupational Safety and Health, said many teens are too inexperienced or poorly trained to recognize dangers in places like restaurant kitchens where doing multiple tasks is common.

"It's hard to be safe when you're running in five directions," said Elliott, whose program tries to educate high school students about job safety.

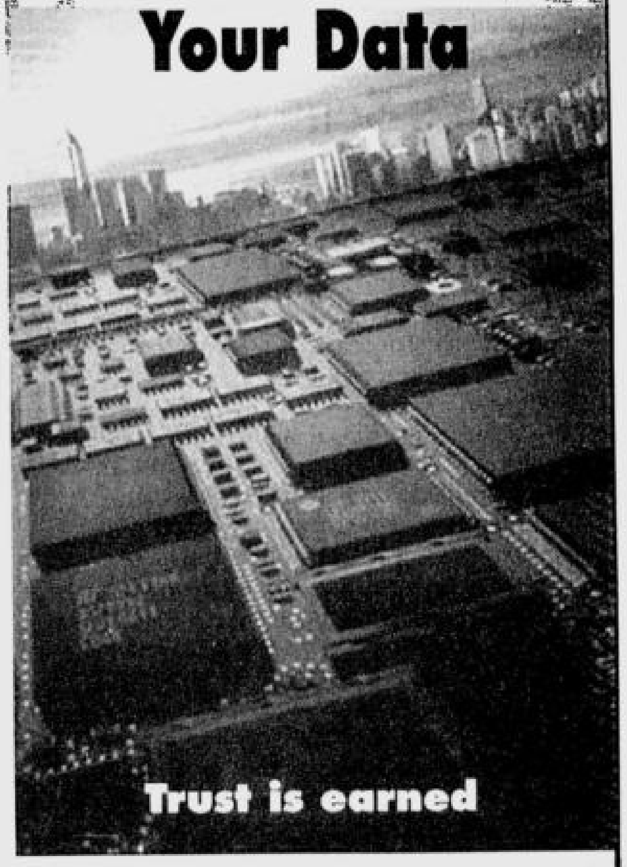
Andrew Britton of Marietta, Ohio, was hospitalized for three days last summer after his leg was slashed on his second day of work at a recycler, causing nerve damage and requiring 30 stitches.

He was 14 then, and said he only remembers getting a general warning to be careful. But Britton said what happened was an accident and no one's to blame.

He's painting murals this summer.

Federal and state laws on child workplace safety can be confusing. And what teenager even thinks about reading them?

Before starting as a supermarket cashier, Jeff Williams, 16, of Gibbstown, NJ, said he was trained how to handle spills, falls and broken items. *AP*



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UNIVERSITY POLL

More in HK think their finances will worsen

HONG KONG—An increasing number of people in Hong Kong believe their finances will worsen in the next 12 months as the territory battles recession and mounting unemployment, a survey showed on Tuesday.

The Chinese University of Hong Kong found 35 percent of 505 respondents expected their lots would worsen in the next year, up from 32 percent in a similar survey in March.

But those who thought their financial situation would improve edged up to 11 percent from 10 percent. The remainder said they had no opinion or the situation would be the same.

Hong Kong has been struggling to emerge from its second recession in four years, with unemployment swelling to a record high of 7.4 percent.

Some 54 percent said their finances deteriorated compared with a year earlier, up from 51 percent in the March poll.

Only 6 percent said things were getting better.

Fifty-three percent of those surveyed said it was not a good time to make any major household purchases, the same percentage as in March. Weak consumer spending has added to the territory's woes in the last few years.

Pessimism about Hong Kong's economic outlook for the next five years has also grown.

Some 40 percent said they expected the economy to get worse, compared with 36 percent in the March survey. The proportion of those who thought the situation would improve dropped to 26 percent from 30 percent.

An economic rebound in Hong Kong will largely depend on the pace of recovery in the United States, the territory's second largest trading partner.

The Hong Kong government forecast the local economy would grow by one percent this year after growing a meager one percent in 2001.

But private economists polled by Reuters expected the economy would grow by 2.1 percent in 2002. *Reuters*

Mattel wins rights to Batman, other Warner characters

LOS ANGELES—Warner Bros. has awarded Mattel Inc. the right to produce toys and games based on its Batman, Superman and Looney Tunes characters, including Bugs Bunny, for the next five years.

The deal gives Mattel the right to produce plush dolls, vehicles, games, action figures and other toys for upcoming movies and television shows featuring the Warner Bros. characters.

The deal is estimated to be worth between $200 million and $500 million over the life of the agreement, according to people familiar with the matter.

Mattel, based in El Segundo, California, will have worldwide rights, except in Asia.

The agreement gives Mattel the lucrative Batman rights now held by rival Hasbro Inc. Those rights will go to Mattel when Warner's current deal with Hasbro runs out at the end of this year.

Mattel won the comprehensive licensing rights in part because Warner Bros. was pleased with the toys and games Mattel produced for last year's hit "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone." Mattel was awarded the licensing rights for the Harry Potter films in 2000.

"They creatively came in with a compelling presentation," said Dan Romanelli, president of Warner Bros. Worldwide Consumer Products. "It was important for them and strategic for them."

Equity Toys has the licensing rights for Warner Bros.' Scooby-Doo and other companies hold the licensing rights for Powerpuff Girls properties.

Warner Bros. is producing a combination live-action-animated film featuring the Looney Tunes characters. It also plans to launch a television show featuring younger versions of Bugs, Daffy Duck and other Looney Tunes characters.

The studio also produces an animated television show featuring Justice League characters, including Superman, Wonder Woman and The Flash. *AP*

Japan's Sega eyes acquisitions of US, European firms

TOKYO—Japanese game software maker Sega Corp. said Tuesday it was considering buying US and European video-game software houses.

"It is a part of our global strategy. We plan on acquiring US and European firms to expand our business," said a Sega spokesman.

The comment came after the company's chief operating officer, Tetsu Kayama, was quoted on the website of the US financial daily The Wall Street Journal saying Sega planned to buy software studios to take on leading game-makers in their home markets.

"We'll increase our studios in the US through buyouts," Kayama told the Journal. "If a studio has something that Sega doesn't have, then we'll do an acquisition."

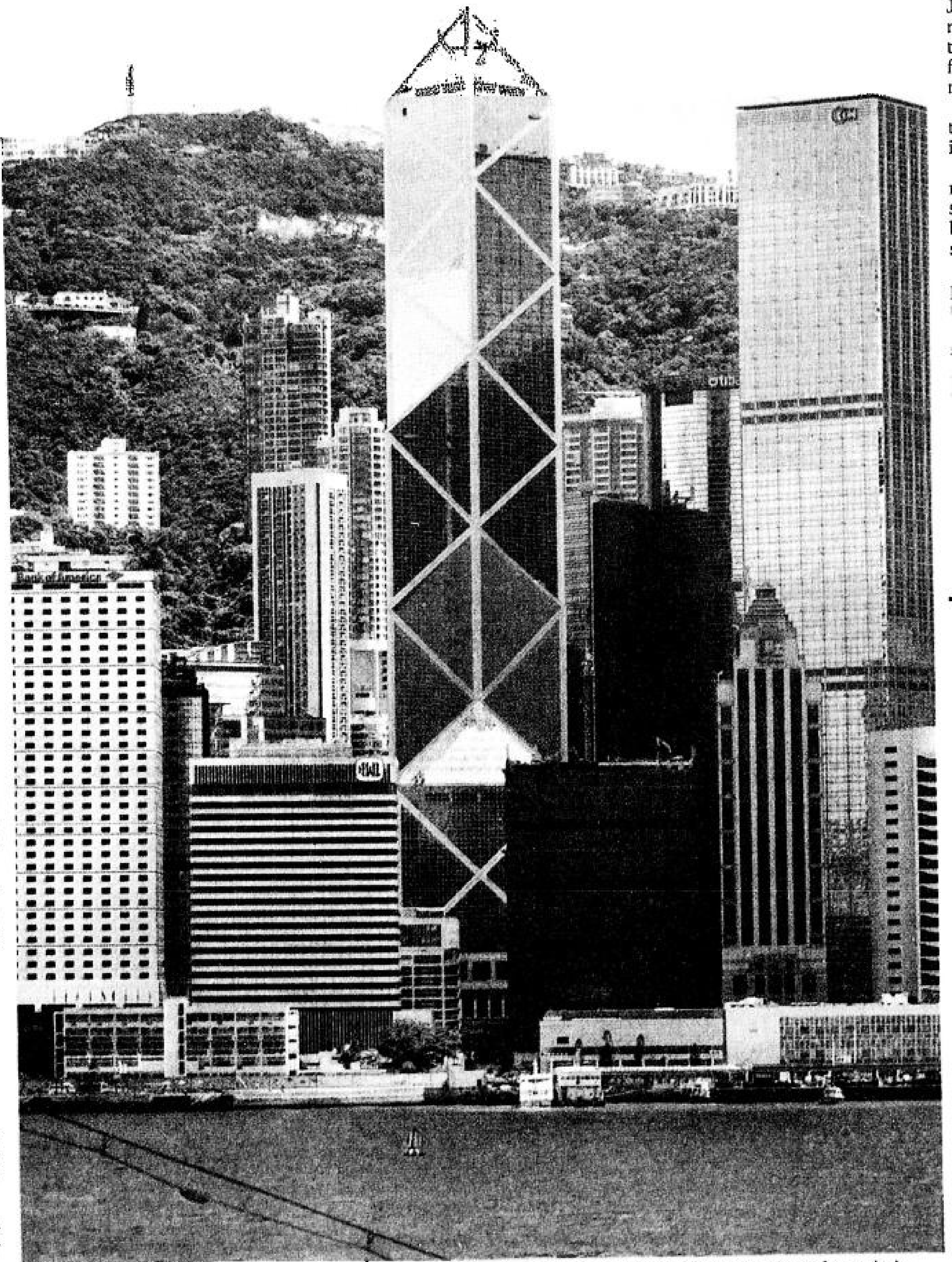
Kayama and the spokesman declined to name the companies Sega was interested in acquiring, saying it aimed to expand into the United States and Europe by creating games locally for those markets rather than exports from Japan.

"Our development organization will become global," Kayama told the Journal.

Sega officials also declined to disclose the size of the acquisitions.

Kayama said talks were focused on makers of games in areas where Sega was weak, such as role-playing games, action games and simulation games, according to the Journal.

For the April to June quarter, Sega's business results "have been generally moving as expected," he added, with sales of Sega's sports titles performing better than projected. *AFP*



A FILE photo shows a view of the Bank of China building in Hong Kong. An increasing number of people in Hong Kong believe their finances will worsen in the next 12 months as the territory battles recession and mounting unemployment. AFP

Tougher conditions dent Aussie confidence

SYDNEY—A global economic slowdown and rising local currency are tightening business conditions in the normally resilient Australian economy, according to data released Tuesday.

Economic indicators also show employment growth in Australia slipped in June, a sign the economy was responding to recent interest rate hikes.

A National Australia Bank monthly survey found business confidence fell to 11.5 points in June from 15.1 points in May. Business conditions declined from 9 to 7 points over the same period.

NAB chief economist Alan Oster said globally exposed sectors, such as agribusiness, were the hardest hit by tightening conditions, resulting in weak export performance.

"Confidence is down significantly across all sectors, albeit at still relatively optimistic levels," he said.

"Falls in global equity prices, together with higher short-term interest rates and a rising exchange rate, appear to be the main forces at play."

Oster said the "household sector"—covering retail, wholesale, recreation/personal services and residential construction—was the one area of the economy that remained buoyant.

Analysts say the data will be of concern to Australia's central bank, as it is the household sector's resilience following interest rate rises in May and June that has fuelled import rises and kept the economy in danger of overheating with growth of more than 4 percent.

Oster believed interest rates would rise next month after a pause in July to assess the impact of falling stock markets.

He predicted rates could rise to 5.5 percent from current levels of 4.75 percent by the end of the year.

A separate survey shows the interest rate hikes have succeeded in slowing employment growth.

The ANZ monthly survey of job advertisements fell 1.8 percent in June, its second consecutive decline.

ANZ chief economist Saul Eslake expressed surprise at the figure, given recent strength in retail and housing industry figures.

However, analysts said job advertisements were expected to pick up in coming months and unemployment figures released Thursday were likely to remain steady at about 6.3 percent. *AFP*

Indonesia raises by 30% import duty on sugar

JAKARTA—The Indonesian government has raised the import duty on sugar by up to more than 30 percent to protect local sugarcane farmers from cheaper imports, the finance ministry said Tuesday.

The rise follows widespread violent protests by sugarcane farmers against cheaper imports.

The new import duties of 27.2 percent on raw sugar and 32.8 percent on white refined sugar took effect on July 3 following a decree by the finance minister, a ministry spokesperson said.

Raw and white sugar import duties had previously stood at 20 and 25 percent, respectively.

The new import duty for raw sugar and sugarcane is now 550 rupiah (6 cents) a kilogram and 700 rupiah a kilogram for white sugar.

Indonesia imported around 1.2 million tons of sugar in 2000, mainly from Thailand.

At Cirebon in West Java last week, 800 sugarcane farmers ransacked warehouses and ships docked at the city's port. Police foiled their attempts to set the imported sugar ablaze. *AFP*

Japan's megabanks cut overseas lending

TOKYO—Japan's megabanking groups plan to cut overseas lending due to shrinking interest margins and difficulties in raising funds, according to a survey published on Tuesday.

Overseas loans outstanding at the groups declined to about $210 billion as of March 31, down by some $40 billion from a year earlier, said the Nihon Keizai Shimbun, which conducted the survey.

The groups are Mitsubishi Tokyo Financial Group Inc., UFJ Holdings Inc., Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corp. and Mizuho Holdings Inc.

Mitsubishi Tokyo Financial Group reduced its overseas lending by about 5 percent in the year to March 31, while the other three groups cut their overseas exposures by 10 to 20 percent, the Nihon Keizai said.

"With their own creditworthiness falling and funding costs rising, the banks are cutting unprofitable loans to non-Japanese companies in overseas markets," the newspaper said.

"The move is part of a growing trend among the top Japanese banks to scale back their overseas presence and concentrate on serving Japanese companies with operations in foreign markets," it said. *AFP*

Internet attacks up 64%, study shows

WASHINGTON—The number of Internet attacks so far this year is up 64 percent from a year ago, with some of the incidents showing "very advanced hackers," a security firm said Monday.

The report by the group Riptech found that Internet attacks grew at an annualized rate of 64 percent in the period from January-June 2002.

The study detected potential cyberterrorism activity from countries where conventional terrorists were known to be harbored or recruited, including Iran, Pakistan, Egypt, Kuwait, and Indonesia, the study found.

But it noted that 80 percent of all attacks originated from only 10 countries: the United States, Germany, South Korea, China, France, Canada, Italy, Taiwan, Britain and Japan.

Elad Yoran, one of the authors of the report, noted that cyberattacks could be launched from a friendly country as well as one that supports terrorists.

"Many of these countries (linked to terrorists) are undeveloped in their Internet infrastructure," he said. *AFP*

Dubai's property market booms on ambitious development plans

DUBAI—The once-sleepy desert sheikhdom of Dubai is busy transforming itself into a prosperous, sky-scraping oasis attracting new residents, tourists and businessmen alike, and the property market is booming.

Land prices in the prime "Tower Area" on Sheikh Zayed Road have surged to more than $1,000 a square foot, representing a phenomenal 27-fold increase over the past decade, according to real estate agents.

But brokers said the $10.9-million price tag for a 10,000-square-foot (900-square-meter) plot sold last month was good value.

"In the context of what you get, it's not actually that bad," said Ron Hinchey, Dubai resident partner of real estate firm Cluttons.

"There are no planning restrictions, so developers could construct a 40-plus story building. Considering the land scarcity factor, the price is not unreasonable," Hinchey told AFP.

Property prices in the area have ballooned thanks to the Dubai government's decision to site the Dubai International Financial Center (DIFC) alongside the main road to Abu Dhabi.

DIFC will cover more than 3.5 million square feet (315,000 square meters), as well as 9 million square feet (810,000 square meters) of office and commercial space.

It entails a multibillion-dollar real estate development featuring a 50-story headquarters—encased in crystal glass to reflect transparency the center aims to offer—and up to 14 other skyscrapers.

DIFC is one of a raft of pioneering schemes the government of Dubai, one of the seven city states that make up the federation of the United Arab Emirates, has launched in a bid to establish itself as the Gulf's business and leisure hub.

"The more development there is, and as new master plan zones start coming on stream, real estate rates will soften and encourage people to come to Dubai," Hinchey said.

Multibillion-dollar schemes such as Dubai Internet City, Dubai Media City and Dubai Marina have all entailed huge real estate development and, for the first time, a chance for foreigners to purchase their own homes.

Local property developers Emaar Properties is selling flats in Dubai Marina, a new city that will house 80,000 people around a man-made dock that stretches for four-and-a-half kilometers, on a freehold basis to foreigners.

Six towers housing 1,200 flats immediately sold out, while hundreds more deluxe villas in the group's Emirates Hills housing project were snapped up in minutes, with expatriate buyers guaranteed automatic three-year residence visa renewals.

"We are having a tremendous response from customers for our properties," said Mohammed Alabbar, Emaar chairman and director general of the Dubai Department of Economic Development. *AFP*

Bush to crack down on corporate misconduct

WASHINGTON—Brushing aside questions about his own record as a businessman, US President George W. Bush said on Monday he would propose tough new laws to crack down on corporate misconduct and give the Securities and Exchange Commission extra cash to investigate abuse.

"In the corporate world, sometimes things aren't exactly black and white when it comes to accounting procedures," Bush said in defending a controversial decade-old transaction at a Texas oil company where he served as a director.

But in proposing what he called "tough new laws and actions to punish abuses," Bush said he hoped to restore "consumer and investor confidence in our markets and in the integrity of corporate America" following scandals at telecom giant WorldCom Inc., Enron Corp. and other high-flying firms.

"Right now that confidence has been shaken," Bush said.

Previewing policies he will outline on Tuesday on Wall Street, Bush vowed to close regulatory loopholes that allow corporate abuse and to enact federal laws to punish dishonest executives.

"We have a duty to every worker, shareholder and investor in America to punish the guilty, to close loopholes and protect employee pensions, and we will," Bush said. ***Reuters***

Accounting firms call for tighter financial reporting

SYDNEY—Three top accountancy firms urged the Australian government Tuesday to introduce tighter financial reports following US financial scandals that have shocked global stock markets.

PricewaterhouseCoopers, Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu and KPMG told a government committee the only way to restore investor confidence was for corporate accounts to provide substantial economic information, rather than just adhering to the letter of accountancy law.

Their comments echo the views of the Australian Securities and Investments Commission, which wants to crack down on corporate accounts as stock market-listed companies present their results for the 12 months to June 30.

Some Australian accountancy firms have previously adopted the attitude that an Enron-type scandal "can't happen here," citing tough market disclosure laws.

However, the failure last year of telecommunications company One.Tel and insurance firm HIH showed the local market was vulnerable.

The firms told the Australian government public accounts committee that the role of auditors should be expanded in a revamped corporate reporting system.

"We need a substance-over-form approach, a corporate reporting model which goes beyond current legal requirements to deliver real economic substance," said PwC chief executive Tony Harrington.

Key issues identified by the firms included providing investors with an analysis of business risks, comment on quality of earnings and disclosure of major trends.

The companies opposed more radical suggestions such as the compulsory rotation of auditors every five years and preventing accountancy firms from selling consultancy services to audit clients.

Australian Prime Minister John Howard has indicated he does not want the regulatory regime to become too rigid in response to the post-Enron public demand for accountability.

"It must be possible to punish criminal behavior and fraud without strangling entrepreneurial and business activity," he told reporters while touring Rome this week. ***AFP***

Greenspan's assets weathered 2001 market turbulence

WASHINGTON—Federal Reserve Chair Alan Greenspan's personal wealth held up well last year despite strong turbulence in US financial markets, although there were indications he might have suffered some losses, according to a government disclosure form released on Monday.

The document showed Greenspan's assets were worth between \$3.1 million and \$6.5 million in 2001, with the bulk invested in rock-solid US government Treasury bonds.

The central bank chief reports his holdings in ranges rather than giving specific numbers.

While the low end of Greenspan's wealth was unchanged from that reported for 2000 in August of last year, the upper-end valuation of his assets was lower by \$3.1 million at \$6 million.

The document also showed that while Greenspan did not own stocks, his wife, NBC reporter Andrea Mitchell, held assets valued between \$1.3 million and \$2.8 million, including stocks in companies such as Kimberly Clark, Clorox, HJ Heinz and Abbott Laboratories.

Mitchell also owned stock in General Electric, NBC's parent company.

Greenspan, whose meticulously chosen words can rock or boost financial markets, steers clear of investment in stock markets in order to avoid conflicts of interest. In the disclosure last year, however, he reported the sale of stock he had owned 2000 in Prime Energy Management Corp. ***Reuters***

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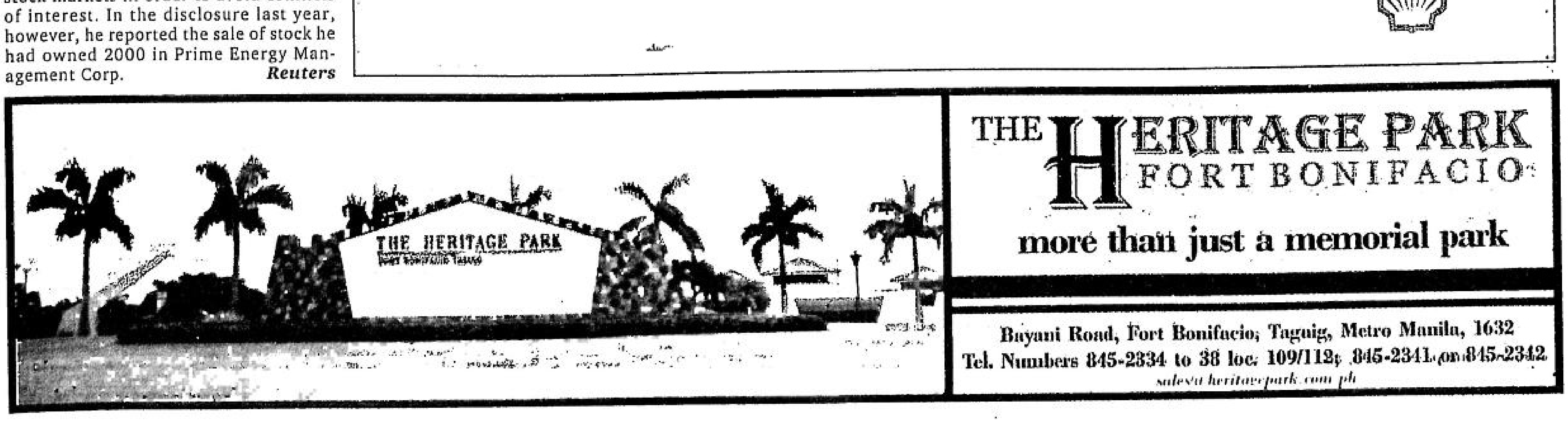
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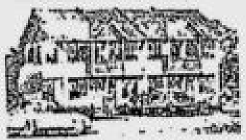

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Local Government Unit (LGU) of Abulug as implementing partner of DAR for ARCP, invite prospective bidders to apply for eligibility and if eligible, to bid for the Concrete Paving of Simayung Dana-III Farm to Market Road, Abulug, Cagayan.

Eligibility statement forms and bidding documents may be secured by interested bidders at the office of the Chairman Bid and Award Committee (BAC) upon payment of non-refundable fee of One Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (P1,500.00) per set on July 8-12, 2002.

Submission of Application for Eligibility	**July 15, 2002 at 10:00 A.M.**
Pre-bid Conference	**July 22, 2002 at 10:00 A.M.**
Submission & Opening of Bids	**August 8, 2002 at 10:00 A.M.**

The approved budget for this project is Seventeen Million Five Hundred Ninety Three Thousand Four Hundred Fifty Nine Pesos and Eleven Centavos (P17,593,459.11).

The BAC reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defect or formality, assume no obligation whatsoever or indemnify to the bidder for the bid most advantageous to the Government. The provision of PD 1594 and its implementing Rules and Regulations as amended August 2000, shall apply to this invitation.

(Sgd.) **BABY ALINE V. ALFONSO**
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(PDI--July 6, 8 & 10, 2002)

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INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND BID

The Cagayan Valley Medical Center hereby invites all interested parties to pre-qualify and bid for the following:

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B. Supply and delivery of Medical/Surgical Supplies, Laboratory Reagents, X-Ray and Dental Supplies, Hospital Equipment
C. Office, Linen, Laundry and Housekeeping Supplies

A pre-bidding conference will be held on following dates:

1. Office, Linen, Laundry and Housekeeping Supplies - **July 29, 2002**
2. Supply and delivery of Medical/Surgical Supplies, Laboratory Reagents, X-Ray and Dental Supplies, Hospital Equipment - **July 30, 2002**
3. Supply and delivery of various Drugs and Medicines - **July 31, 2002**

This will be held at CVMC Conference Hall at 9:00 AM, submission and opening of bids will be held on **August 19-21, 2002**, issuance of Bid documents will be from **August 1-14, 2002.**

Only pre-qualified bidders will be issued bid documents and allowed to participate in the bidding upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of FIVE HUNDRED PESOS (P500.00).

Interested qualified bidders may obtain further details from the Cagayan Valley Medical Center Pre-qualification Bids and Awards Committee.

CVMC reserves the right to reject any and/or all bids to waive any formality found therein or to accept such bids as may be considered advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) **EMMANUEL F. ACLUBA, MD, MHA**
Chief of Hospital III

(PDI – July 6, 8 & 10, 2002)

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The PNOC - Energy Development Corporation (PNOC-EDC) invites interested accredited or prequalified contractors to submit sealed bids for the project:

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Bid documents may be secured from the Contracts Administration Group (c/o Raymond Sison) starting **July 3, 2002, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday thru Friday** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Five Hundred Pesos (P500.00).

For purposes of clarification, a pre-bid meeting will be held on **July 17, 2002, 2:30 p.m.** at PNOC-EDC's Conference Room, Ground Floor, Building V at the above address.

Sealed bids in two (2) sets shall be received by the Contracts Administration Group at the above address **not later than 2:00 p.m. of July 30, 2002** and then to be publicly opened immediately thereafter.

PNOC-EDC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any informality therein, to accept such bids or to award any part of the work to any bidder whose bid is considered most advantageous to PNOC-EDC.

(Sgd.) **ESTER R. GUERZON**
Manager, Operations Services Division

(PDI -- July 10, 2002)

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Interested parties may secure the bid documents for a non-refundable fee of P200.00 from the NHA Project Office located at the D'Castellamonte Bldg., #12 Otek St., Baguio City.

SCHEDULE: The submission of the Pre-Qualification requirements will be received during office hours from 10 July 2002 to 14 August 2002. A pre-bid conference will be held on 8 August 2002 at 2:00 p.m. Sealed offers will be received from 8:00 AM. To 12:00 NN on 15 August 2002 which will be opened at 2:00 PM of the same day. All transaction will be held/entertained at the NHA Baguio Project Office.

The NHA reserves the right to reject or all bids, call off this tender prior to bid acceptance and call for new tender under amended rules as may be deemed advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) **EDGARDO D. PAMINTUAN**
General Manager

(PDI--July 10 & 12, 2002)

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IN MEMORY OF THE
THIRD DEATH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE LATE

MARCELO BRIONES FERNAN

24 October 1927 – 11 July 1999

Holy Masses will be offered on Thursday, 11 July 2002
in the following churches:

CEBU

Cebu Memorial Park	5:30 P.M.
Sto. Rosario Church	6:30 A.M.
Redemptorist Church	7:00 A.M.
Cebu Metropolitan Cathedral	7:30 A.M.
Basilica del Sto. Niño	8:00 A.M.
St.Therese of the Child Jesus, Lahug	12:15 P.M
Mabolo Parish Church	6:00 P.M.
Sacred Heart Parish Church	6:00 P.M.
Capitol Parish Church	6:15 P.M.

MANILA

Our Lady of Mt.Carmel	6:00 A.M.
Santuario de San Jose	7:15 A.M.
St.John Bosco Parish	7:30 A.M./12:15 P.M.
Mary the Queen Parish	6:00 P.M.
Santuario de San Antonio	6:00 P.M.
St.Alphonsus de Liguori Church	6:00 P.M.

BOGO, CEBU

San Vicente Parish Church	5:00 A.M.

Please join his family and friends in prayer for his eternal happiness.

Colonel (Ret.) Virgilio M. dela Cueva

Passed away on June 26, 2002 in New Haven Ct., U.S.A.
at the age of 64.

He is the husband of **Elena (Bel) Bolinao dela Cueva**; father of **Christine** and **Marie dela Cueva** and the late **Cristover dela Cueva**

He is the son of the late **Francisco dela Cueva Sr.**, and **Maura Mondugar dela Cueva.** He is the brother of **Sandy**, **Paquito**, **Minerva**, **Elsie dela Cueva Santos**, and **Kelly dela Cueva Gera.**

A man of principle, dignity, respect and courage he leaves behind sisters-in-law, brothers-in-law, nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends.

His remains lie in state at Celentano Funeral Homes in New Haven Ct., USA. He will be brought to the Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels, Sucat Road, Parañaque City. Friends may visit from July 11 to July 13, 2002. There will be evening wake services at 8:00 PM.

A mass will be offered at 8:30 AM on July 14, 2002 prior to his interment at the Libingan Ng Mga Bayani, Fort Bonifacio, Makati City.

The memory of a *good* man can never be taken from the *grateful hearts* of those who *knew and love* him.

"...absent with the body to be present with the Lord."
Matthew 10:38

In Loving Memory
Of

ANTONIO PASTOR ABAYA

Who passed away in the grace of our Lord on July 5, 2002
at the age of 68.

His wife **Beverly**; children **Michael**, **Jimmy** and **Malou**, and **Tiffany**; grandchildren **Angelika**, **Leila** and **Bianca**; brother **Gavino Abaya Jr.**; sisters **Teresita Abaya Okol** and **Rosario Abaya Atienza**; in-law **Cesar C. Okol**; other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the National Shrine of the Sacred Heart, Sacred Heart Street, Makati City, where Holy Masses will be offered at 7:00 p.m. daily.

Funeral Mass will be celebrated on Thursday, July 11, 2002 at 10:00 a.m. at the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception in Batangas City, after which interment will immediately follow at the Batangas Catholic Cemetery.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

Always caring...

INQUIRER OBITUARIES

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:

❶ Copy of Death Certificate
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT
MESSAGE OF THANKS
DEATH ANNIVERSARY
REQUIEMS
FREE OBIT DESIGN

Our Dearly Beloved Mommy

AMPARO SUNICO RODRIGUEZ
"Amparing"

Peacefully joined her Creator on July 7, 2002
at the age of 78.

Her loving husband BENJAMIN (†); children and their families WALLY, DODGE & GABRIEL RODRIGUEZ, LENNIE (†) & NOEL FAJARDO, DITAS, REY, CELINE, FRANCIS & KEVIN MARTELINO; brothers and sisters NEO (†), LILY (†), DING, MAC (†), TURING (†), FREDY & ANGELING; in-laws, nephews, nieces, other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Athena Chapel, Capitol Memorial Chapel, Inc., Araneta Avenue corner Quezon Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be at the North Cemetery, Manila after the 1:00 PM Mass.

ELIZABETH M. LAURAYA

April 02, 1936 - July 09, 2002

Her husband **Jose**; children **Joel** and **Amle**, **Inso** and **Vicky**, **Celet** and **Mona**, **Martin** and **Jenny**, **Tess** and **Rollie**, **Baby**, **Dong** and **Wilma**, **Peter**, **Florita** and grandchildren, request the pious readers to pray for peace for the entire family.

The body lies in state at Loyola Memorial Chapels, Marikina City.

Interment will be at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina (date and time to be announced later). For further details, please contact Telephone No. 9418860 (ask for Jose),09178303839/9345176 (ask for Martin).

II Corinthians 5:8 *"... absent from the body at home with the Lord."*

Phil. 1:21 *"For me to live is Christ and to die is gain."*

DR. MARIO G. VILLACORTA

Peacefully joined our Lord on July 6, 2002
at the age of 78.

His bereaved wife **Dr. Amanda Marcelo**; children and their spouses **Mario Jr.** and **Jocelyn Savella**, **Marie Zelie**, **Nelson** and **Annabella Patag**, **Rene** and **Maria Aisa Ebbah**, **Dr. Maria Theresa**, **Dr. Maria Elena** and **Luis Joseph Cortez**; grandchildren **Janyka Mignon** and **Mario John Jericho**, **Nelson Jr.** and **Joanna**, **Mario Miguel**, **Claudine**, **Nicole**, **Monique** and **Pauline**, **Karen Grace**; other relatives and friends, request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Santuario De San Antonio, Capilla De San Francisco, McKinley Road, Forbes Park, Makati City, where Masses will be said everyday at 8:00 PM.

Interment will be on Thursday, July 11, 2002 at the Heritage Memorial Park, Fort Bonifacio after the 1:00 PM Mass at the Santuario De San Antonio.

Arch. EDGARDO "DEX" A. TIUSECO, U.A.P., P.I.I.D.

of Iriga City and Quezon City

Peacefully joined our Lord on July 7, 2002 at the age of 48.

He is now re-united with "Papa", **Atty. Manuel S. Tiuseco**, "Manoy", **Eunemio A. Tiuseco**, and favorite aunt, "Iday", **Gertrudis S. Tiuseco.**

His loving mother **Rufina A. Tiuseco**; brothers and sisters **Dr. Antonio A. Tiuseco**, **Dr. Erlinda T. Dacanay**, **Atty. Francia T. Manlapaz**, **Atty. Noel A. Tiuseco**, **Clarissa T. Mena, M.A.** and **Ariel A. Tiuseco**; brothers and sisters-in-law, nephews and nieces, request relatives and friends to pray for his eternal rest in the home of our Heavenly Father.

His remains lie in state at the Christ the King Memorial Chapels, Greenmeadows Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Saturday, July 13, 2002 at the Holy Cross Memorial Park, Novaliches, Quezon City, after the 7:00 a.m. Funeral Mass.

PEREGIL GASPAR FABROS

of Camiling, Tarlac

Peacefully joined his Creator
on Sunday, July 7, 2002 at the age of 77.

His wife **Nora**; children **Leni**, **Bella**, **Ching** (†), **Daisy** and **Dit-dit**; grandchildren, relatives and friends will always remember him for his deep love for his family and request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at the Mortuary Philam Homes, West Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Saturday, July 13, 2002 at the Himlayang Pilipino in Quezon City after the 8:00 a.m. Mass.

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People, Events & Products

Aries Espinosa, Editor
aespinosa@inquirer.com.ph

First sun-powered satellite television set up

POOR and rich alike may now avail themselves of a product just installed at the 15th floor of the pioneering "clean and green" Solar Electric Co. Inc. (Solarco) along Annapolis Street, Greenhills, San Juan, Metro Manila.

The S&T "sights and sounds" and news and information system is actually the maiden offer of a commercial, digital, direct-to-home television entertainment via satellite in the Philippines.

It's a state-of-the-art science and technology invention with value-added, down-to-earth innovations. Fact is, its simplicity has overtaken cable TV in popularity abroad.

Solarco founding president Robert L. Puckett says his firm has got all it takes to give the public the most unique system of TV news and entertainment since his company commercialized natural energy systems back in 1976.

An educator-environmentalist who supports a scholarship program for poor but deserving youth in Iloilo and Metro Manila, Puckett believes that a true Christian should share his intellectual and material resources to promote the well-being of humankind and foster peaceful coexistence between and among nations.

"Like our lean but mean Solarco team of experts in sun, wind and water energy resources, this latest S&T configuration completed only right in our office is a 'take-it-where-you-want-and-need-it' viewing and listening post—whether up on the hills and mountains, on remote, isolated island resorts, by the moonlit bay or any other conceivable place where sunlight and wind can be harnessed for power and lighting," Puckett says.

As an information-education campaign (IEC) and outreach service to the public and all media concerned, Solarco maintains a 24-hour access to free info and consultation through solar@compass.com.ph, solar@skyinet.net and thorig10@hotmail.com or agzorig@hotmail.com or faxtel (049) 827-1271.

GMA WATER AMBULANCE IN SEA TRIAL

Former Navy officials led by Ret. Navy Capt. And Baseco president Proceso Maligalig and Ret. Commodore and Pagcor director Domingo Calajate led the inspection team in evaluating the seaworthiness of the GMA water ambulance. Also shown are Nelson P. Pangan and Jimmy Jimenez of Atlanta Industries Inc. marine resources division. The GMA water ambulance is designed for rescue and quick response mission for areas perennially submerged under floodwater. The unique construction of the locally designed rescue boat is made by Atlanta Industries and is ideal for rugged Philippine conditions.

HOTELEX 2002 THANKS EXEC CHEFS

Following the success of the recently concluded Hotelex 2002 food and hospitality trade exhibit at the World Trade Center Metro Manila, event organizer Worldexco awarded plaques of appreciation to its supporting organizations. Shown is Worldexco president Lynn Z. Romero (2nd from left) thanking its partner in the special events division of Hotelex 2002, the Hotel & Restaurant Chefs Association of the Philippines, represented by (from left) HRCAP director Fernando Solo (Casino Filipino Paranaque), president Bert Francisco (Grand Boulevard Hotel) and vice president Pablo Logro (Diamond Hotel).

STARS AS MR & MS SWI

Mr and Ms Slimmers World of the recent Star Olympics '02, Zoren Legaspi and Rochelle Barrameda, pose with fitness training head Danny Cordero and Slimmers World director Bopeep Arroyo.

Saint Michael's College of Laguna, Papscu hold education conference on E-knowledge

EDUCATORS must learn to cope with their fears and embrace the e-world, but without forgetting that the Internet is simply a tool of education.

This was the essence of the message delivered by Fr. Roderick C. Salazar Jr., SVD, during the 2nd Educators Conference hosted by Saint Michael's College of Laguna (SMCL) in partnership with the Philippine Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities (Papscu).

Responding to the conference's theme "e-mancipating the e-ducator through e-knowledge," Fr. Salazar, president of University of San Carlos and chair of the Coordinating Council of the Private Educational Associations (Cocopea), said in his keynote speech that educators face the challenge of not only passing on the knowledge of the past to the students "but to know what is happening now and today and anticipating what will happen tomorrow." To meet that challenge without difficulty, Fr. Salazar added, educators must learn to open their minds and to accept the changes – and opportunities--that information technology can give.

"We must expand our horizons, explore other shores and extend our vision," Fr. Salazar implored his audience at the conference.

While Fr. Salazar encouraged members of the academe to embrace the speed and comprehensive knowledge provided by an electronic world both to the student and teacher, he also stressed that cyberspace cannot replace a teacher or one's community especially in building a person's set of values. "There is no substitute for human encounter ... the Internet cannot make you smart, cannot judge, and cannot teach anything without the proper human guidance ... How I wish that every modem comes with a surgeon general warning: judgment not included. You have to provide that yourself."

Along with Fr. Salazar was Teresita U. Quirino, president of the Technological Institute of the Philippines (TIP), Sophia and the Philippine Association of University Women, who gave practical tips on how educators can aspire for excellence in their profession.

For the afternoon session, SMCL invited speakers to talk on image improvement, building self-confidence and inner wellness. PR maven Amylyn Sison De-Quiros talked about "Marketing Yourself: Image Dimension" while Roel Ramirez, senior AVP of the Development Bank of the Philippines, discussed on how public relations can be a tool for educators, Antonia Cruz-Siy, a senior counselor for the Center of Family Ministries of the Ateneo De Manila University, did an inspiring lecture on maintaining balance between the individual and society.

Aside from SMCL's faculty and non-teaching staff, the event was attended by several educational institutions in NCR and Region IV such as TIP, STI e-College Southwoods, IETI, University of Perpetual Help System (Laguna, Rizal, Molino and Calamba), Emilio Aguinaldo College, Namei Polytechnic Institute, Tomas Claudio Memorial College, Lipa Colleges, Colegio San Antonio, Colegio Santa Catalina, San Lorenzo School, Holy Rosary Academy, Laguna Eastern Academy, Joy in Learning Center and Holy Infant Jesus of Prague.

Now an annual event, SMCL's education conferences are part of the school's extension services with an aim to form a networking link among Papscu members and with the Laguna Private School Administrators Association. It is also the school's sincere attempt to empower and ennoble grassroots educators so that they will become truly responsive and visionary especially with the changing times.

BITS Clips

July 11 is 7-Eleven Day

PHILIPPINE Seven Corp., the local licensee of the 7-Eleven chain of convenience stores, celebrates its 20th year of operations in the country with a party on each of its 166 7-Eleven stores on July 11. Dubbed 7-Eleven Day, the celebration is in conjunction with 7-Eleven International's 75th anniversary. With more than 6,000 stores in the United States and Canada and more than 23,000 worldwide, 7-Eleven is the largest convenience retailer in the world. At the stores, customers would be treated to 7-Eleven's biggest promo ever, the Jackpot Match-Up. For every P51 purchase, customers can win instant snack prizes or join the raffle and win cash prizes of up to P711,111. On the same day, Philippine Seven employees will go to the La Mesa watershed to plant 300 tree seedlings to commemorate the occasion.

Moldex business opportunity session

MOLDEX Realty Marketing Inc. invites people with a knack for selling to attend its Business Opportunity Session on July 10 from 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. at the Aberdeen Court Board Room, 7842 Makati Avenue, Makati City. This meeting aims to brief real estate agents, brokers and other sales practitioners on the advantages and rewards of realty selling. MRMI is the exclusive marketing arm of Moldex Realty Inc. and Moldex Land Inc. 19 medium to high-end residential lot and house-and-lot projects, including the residential condominium 1322 Roxas Boulevard, are being marketed by the company. For particulars, call MRMI at 832-7777 locals 121, 123 or 133 and ask for Celeste of PSM or Evelyn Apdo of division 2.

Abenson adds another

ABENSON, the largest appliance store network, has just grown bigger. It just recently opened its new branch at the 2nd level of Circle C Mall-Congressional, Quezon City. With a large floor space, clients can enjoy an array of appliances for every family need. Showcased are a whole line of Sony, Sharp, JVC, National Panasonic and Homeplus furniture on half price sale up to July 14.

Garcia new dentist

GARCIA

MA. GIANELLIE Buenaventura-Garcia has recently passed the Board Exams for Dentistry. She is a graduate of Centro Escolar University and had already taken her oath June 22 at the Manila Midtown Hotel. She is the daughter of Jovito R. Garcia and Rosanna Buenaventura-Garcia.

ENERGY ALLIANCE SEALED

Soluziona/Efficient Lighting Initiative (ELI) country director Alexander DR Abiaza (seated, left) and Institute of Integrated Electrical Engineers of the Philippines Inc (IIEE) national president Francis V. Mapile sign the memorandum of agreement for the development and promotion of the IIEE-ELI Manual of Practice on Efficient Lighting, pursuant to the drive to educate and encourage electrical engineers on the use of efficient lighting products. This is funded by the Global Environment Facility and administered globally by the International Finance Corp (IFC). Also shown, standing from left, are Randee S. Gabriel, Soluziona/ELI program associate, Virgilio C. Flordeliza, IIEE national treasurer, Rodolfo N. Ferrer, IIEE director, Arthur A. Lopez, chair, IIEE standards committee, Arturo M. Zabala, vice chair, IIEE standards committee, and Ramon P. Ayaton, head, technical group, IIEE.

SHARP TOLL-FREE NUMBER OPERATIONAL

Sharp (Phils) Corp., one of the country's largest consumer electronics manufacturers, announced that its toll-free number is now operational. Customers nationwide can call 1-800-888-4952 to make technical inquiries, request after-sales service, voice complaints, or simply ask about the availability of particular appliance models. The toll-free number gives customers access to the largest consumer electronics service network in the Philippines. Run by Sharp Phils. Services Corp. (SPSC), the service arm of Sharp Phils., the network has 26 company-owned service centers and has 40 Sharp Authorized Service Shops under its wing. Many of its expert technicians were trained at Sharp's technical facilities in Osaka, Japan. Here, SPSC president and general manager Ernesto F. Rendon gives a pep talk to customer service personnel at Sharp's main office in Muntinlupa City during the service unit's first week of operation.

Republic of the Philippines
PROVINCE OF ILOILO
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
Niel D. Tupas, Sr.
GOVERNOR

OFFICE TELS. 337-17-39
FAX (033) 337-4230

June 24, 2002

INVITATION FOR QUALIFICATION/ ELIGIBILITY AND BIDDING

The Bid and Award Committee of the Province of Iloilo hereby invites Contractors who are duly accredited by the National Power Corporation (NAPOCOR); and are classified by and registered with the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) as **Medium A**; for *Electrical Works Specialties (High Voltage Lines and Substation Equipment Installation)*, to apply for qualification/eligibility, and if subsequently found eligible, to bid for the Supply, Installation and Commissioning of Substation Equipment, Transmission Lines; and related Sub-station Civil Works for the New Iloilo Provincial Capitol at Iloilo City.

Qualification/Accreditation statements are available for issuance to interested Contractors at the PBAC Secretariat, Provincial Planning and Development Office, Home Technology Building, Iloilo National High School, Luna Street, La Paz, Iloilo City on **July 16 to 17, 2002**, upon presentation of a Letter of Intent addressed to and received by the Office of Governor Niel D. Tupas. Submission of qualification/accreditation documents will be on **July 26, 2002** only.

Plans and bidding documents are available at the Provincial Engineer's Office, Multi-purpose Covered Gym, Magsaysay Village, La Paz, Iloilo City for issuance to qualified Contractors on **August 9, 2002** only, upon payment of the amount of Three Thousand Pesos (P3,000.00), which is non-refundable.

The BAC shall hold pre-bid conference on **August 16, 2002** at 2:00 p.m. at the SP Session Hall of the Old Provincial Capitol at Iloilo City.

Sealed bids shall be received by the BAC on **August 23, 2002** from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the SP Session Hall of the Old Provincial Capitol at Iloilo City, which will be publicly opened at 2:15 p.m. of the same date.

The Provincial Government of Iloilo reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any formality in such bids as may be considered most advantageous to the Iloilo Provincial Government.

(Sgd.) **NIEL D. TUPAS**
Governor

(PDI - July 3, 10 & 17, 2002)

Is the human resource manager a 'contravida'?

By Tita Datu Puangco

I READ the article about an accounting manager saying that their human resource officer is a non-performing asset. In my case, I am an accounting manager whose job has been enriched to include human resources. I have tried very hard these past years to handle the heavy work load including talking to so many people everyday. Frankly, I feel very stressed.

My problem is this-I am frequently cast as "*contravida*" because I am in charge of enforcing discipline. I don't get any help from the other managers. Often, I am tempted to quit. I know that my duty is to enforce the rules. How can a company be lax with rules?

Advice
FOR THE
ANXIOUS PERSON
AT WORK

I want to learn how to do it. I don't have any training in people skills. I am better with numbers. Do you know of seminars I can attend so I can learn? Do you think becoming a member of the Personnel Managers Association of the Philippines as you suggested would help?

Bothered Disciplinarian

You truly have a big challenge in front of you. But your problems are not insurmountable. First, you have to recognize that your job as a human resource manager is a staff job. It is not a line job. While you are the custodian of the code of discipline ensuring that it is applied properly, you don't have to handle each and every disciplinary case. Your job is to give service and advice to line managers. It is the job of the line managers to enforce the rules. If you have been doing the job for them, it is no wonder that you end up the company villain.

Line managers

What you can do is to train line managers. Help them recognize that managing the people under them or human resource management is their job. They cannot delegate to you this very important task. They are the people in the front line who can observe disciplinary incidents. They have the data to enforce rules. Often, line managers lack the skills to do this. So you may have to enable them to handle discipline in a positive way, get them to learn the code of discipline at heart, learn to file a disciplinary report, etc.

If you wish, we at Ancilla can help diagnose the skills where your managers have needs and customize a program for you. As for your desire to improve your handling of people, remember it is a skill just like any other, and therefore can be learned.

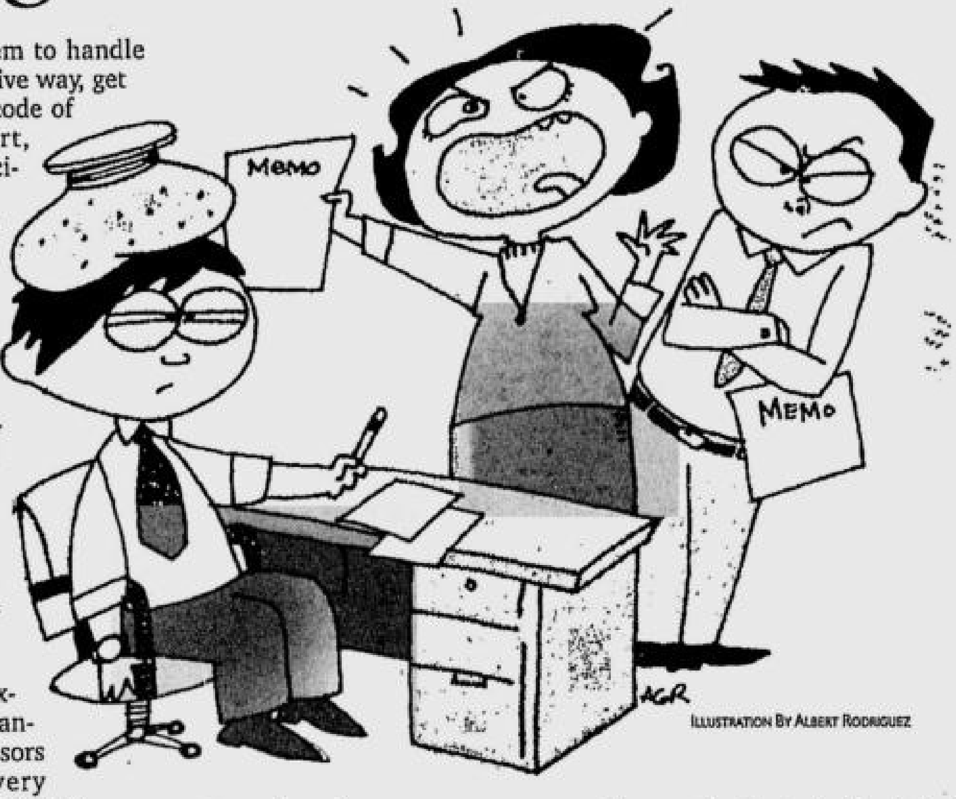


ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

Scapegoat

Based on my experience when managers and supervisors renege on this very important task, they lose the respect of their people. Then performance and productivity suffer. If the human resource manager imposes the sanction, then he or she can easily become the scapegoat for the sins of omission of the line managers. Or, even worse, the company develops a culture where laxity around rules becomes the norm.

Then, with regard to the stress, try to discover where it is coming from. Is it because you are basically an introvert who succeeded as an accountant and are now forced to take on an extrovert's job that constantly deals with people? Or is it because of work overload considering you have a super enriched job? Or is it your worry about what other people think of you? Try to gain greater awareness and do something about it.

Solutions

If you are more of an introvert, take breaks to be alone before meeting with people. Don't do a marathon job of meeting people one after the other. If it is because of work overload, you may need to examine your priority management system. Find out what you can delegate. Then, stop worrying what people think of you. What is important is to proactively strengthen your alliance with other managers and supervisors. Then, they start to share the challenge of discipline enforcement.

Then again, you may have to educate your boss about this shift in paradigm. He may automatically call you every time he or she comes across a disciplinary problem. He may need to understand that disciplinary action has to be the task of each and every manager.

Finally, joining the Personnel Managers Association of the Philippines can become a broadening experience for you. You can meet many friends who share your problems. It also provides many developmental opportunities, especially in the human resource management area. You can contact the PMAP secretariat at telephone numbers 7261581 or 7261532 or e-mail *pmap@pmap.org.ph*.

(Ms Puangco is CEO and president of Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting. Send comments, feedback or requests for advice through e-mail to ancillaedc@ pacific.net.ph or fax to 892-2902.)

Texting is a bane!

By Josie O. Santamaria

(Previously, People at Work carried an article, "Text messaging: boon or bane?" Below is one feedback from a regular contributor on this apparently controversial topic.)

Boss
1 Message
Received
StephB.

STEPH BRAVO

ANY *balikbayan* will tell you that there are more cell phone users here in our country than in the US, Canada, Europe, Australia and elsewhere. The cell phone has become a status symbol even among elementary and high school students although in many schools, its use is prohibited in the classrooms. Many college students and employees cannot leave home without it.

To have the latest and the most expensive models is the desire of many cell phone users, even among people in the lower socioeconomic level. It is available for sale in many places and can be conveniently paid for on installment basis. Sometime ago, a daily newspaper carried the story of a grief-stricken father who recounted how he had saved to give his only daughter her own cell phone. This was to be the cause of her death when she was stabbed by a drug addict who grabbed the cell phone from her inside an FX taxi, killing her when she had resisted.

The cell phone is a boon since it offers quick, instant and cheap communication. People can connect to each other instantly, wherever and whenever they are. The cell phone relieves people of stress and tensions because they know what is going on at home or at work, what other people are doing, or when people would be late. Waiting for a bus or taxi and while riding on these vehicles, people automatically talk and text on their cell phones.

But the cell phone can also become a bane. It can be a source of stress and tension. A boss can get easily in touch with his employee wherever the latter is and give assignments. It is not uncommon to hear an employee complain that even when he is asleep or having private moments with loved ones, the boss is on his back. Some bosses think they give a good impression when they constantly communicate with subordinates or superiors. But this only shows lack of self-confidence or confidence in others.

Here are other situations when the cell phone becomes a bane:

· When you want to listen attentively to people and a cell phone rings;

· When you want to be listened to (if you are a teacher, trainer, facilitator, meeting leader) but are interrupted by cell phones ringing;

· When you want to have eye contact with a person and the latter pretends to listen though his eyes dart sideways or downwards to his cell phone;

· When you feel you are not given the respect you deserve because the person you are talking to gives his attention to the cell phone instead;

· When you are participating in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass or a religious service and a cell phone rings.

In these instances, one is almost under the control of the cell phone rather than the other way around.

Here are some suggestions on the proper use of the cell phone so it does not become a bane.

· Show respect to the person you are talking with by listening attentively. To do this, put off your cell phone. You are still distracted even if you keep it on silent or discreet mode.

· Show respect to the one facilitating or conducting a class or a meeting and to the other attendees by putting off your cell phone. And never ever talk to any one on your cell phone while you are inside a class or attending a meeting.

· Show respect to God and to the others when you are inside a church or a religious place and are attentively participating in the Holy Eucharist or attending a service.

BREAKFAST CHAT
How to enhance personal, professional success

By Ricky B. Garcia

(People at Work on Studio 23's Breakfast went on air yesterday with Mr. Chito San Mateo, director of the Philippine Society for Training and Development or PSTD as guest. Here's the follow-up of that early morning breakfast interview conducted by Bam Aquino, Breakfast program host.)

PaW: What are the perceived needs and conditions that should be addressed by a training program for an organization?

San Mateo: The training program should address business conditions such as competition and changes in the environment. Changes in the environment, such as technological innovations, would require people to acquire new knowledge and skills. In terms of perceived needs, the direction of the organization is as important as the needs of employees to be effective and efficient in their jobs. An employee must possess the knowledge, skills and attitude to be productive in the workplace. Also, if we want to provide a well-rounded training, the personal development of people is a consideration.

PaW: How do you create a unique enrichment program for employees to enhance personal and professional success?

Enrichment programs should be focused on what employees need. Programs should be designed to help employees achieve a certain balance in their professional and personal lives. At Inquirer where I am the Training Head, aside from professional training programs, we have employees' clubs that provide them with opportunities to develop their personal talents. This approach is a unique enrichment program for employees to achieve a work life balance.

PaW: Do you follow a guiding principle to propel your manpower to achieve your company's goal?

San Mateo: I believe that education is a life-long process. In order to ensure the competitiveness of an organization, its people must be equipped with updated knowledge and skills. They also need to develop the right mind-set to possess the proper attitude towards their work. Training is a powerful tool to achieve the company's goal

PaW: How do you upgrade skills and knowledge of your employees in their field of expertise?

San Mateo: The employees' present performance level is a useful source of data to determine what skills and knowledge they need. That's where I identify a gap--the difference between the actual performance and desired performance.

PaW: What are some strategies on how you encourage and sustain the active participation and involvement of your people in all your activities?

San Mateo: I consider the employees as my customer. I respond to their needs. But another important consideration is top management support. The commitment of top management is critical to the success of any training program. They must believe in the program and as a training professional, I must be able to present to them how the program responds to the needs of the organization and its people. Likewise, to sustain active participation, I coordinate with line managers. Schedules are important. Even if your program is good, without proper coordination with line managers on schedule, you'll end up having empty chairs in your training sessions.

SAN MATEO

PaW: Any tips on how to assist your workers in reinventing their skills for professional and personal success?

San Mateo: I believe in the saying, "Know thyself." Identify your talents and abilities. Discover areas for improvement. Maintain an open mind to the things we learn. Do not be complacent. Always strive to continuously educate one's self. There are a lot of ways on how we can learn and hone ourselves. Seminars are just one of them. Education is a lifetime commitment.

'Prophecies'...

From p. B12

marks of leaders are clues to these expectations. These cues could be explicit or implicit, deliberate or tacit, open or implied and even those that we omit to do or say.

3. People tend to respond to these cues by adjusting their behaviors to match them. A leader's word or action is worth a thousand commands.

4. The result is that the original expectations become true. You expect somebody to make a mistake and, no sooner than you think or say it, that person will commit a mistake. In like manner, when you expect somebody to do well, that person will even exceed your expectation or at least do her/his best.

This creates a continuing cycle of self-fulfilling prophecy.

Power of media

Leadership is a significant responsibility of all media organizations and every media person. Every media professional is a leader, a teacher. Even those who work in the backroom, e.g. scriptwriter, set designer, clapper, etc. We are in that critical position to mold the culture of our country. We are not there only to entertain. Our viewers, readers and listeners view, read and listen to us intently and hold on to every word we say or write. Our responsibility is enormous and nothing to trifle about.

Speaking of media leadership, this is one news story that should have landed in the very front pages of PDI and given the proper media coverage it deserves. *Dapat ito ang pinagpistahan ng TV, radyo at mga diyaryo.*

A leader, a hero

Though late, PDI published yesterday in the Metro section (p.A21) a story about a man who died trying to save a young girl who was electrocuted in the floodwaters at the corner of Dapitan and Quintos Streets, Manila last Thursday. Our hero is young entrepreneur Paolo A. Lopez. He gave his life to save another he didn't even know. His life could have been possibly saved if the good Samaritan in a van who picked up the girls also picked him up and brought him to UST Hospital. It was a kindhearted tricycle driver who rushed him to the hospital.

Then, his body could not be released from the hospital until his friends helped out financially. Likewise, at Arlington Funeral Homes, Q.C., his family and friends settled for the cheapest available room and casket to give him a decent wake and burial that he deserves.

We might have gained another hero but his family lost a breadwinner. His father died of cancer two years ago and he has since been his family's hero. Now he, too, is gone.

Those of you who want to help defray his funeral expenses and leave some for his family, please write to his mother, Lourdes Abaricia Lopez, c/o People At Work Section, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Bldg., Chino Roces Ave., Makati City or email peopleatwork@inquirer.com.ph.

Giving "A"

Media and leaders can use their power to make self-fulfilling prophecies in a positive manner. Here's a way given by "The Art of Possibility" authors Rosamund Stone Zander and Benjamin Zander.

They experimented on giving an A to their student and orchestra members. They write, "The practice of giving the A both invents and recognizes a universal desire in people to contribute to others, no matter how many barriers there are to its expression. We can choose to validate the apathy of a boss, a player, or a student and become resigned ourselves, or we can choose to honor them an unfulfilled yearning to make a difference... 'So,' I tell the class, 'the next time you hear the little second-violin melody in your head that says, 'I'm not going to class because I'm too tired,' or 'I have too much to do, and I know it won't make any difference anyway'-remember that you are an A student. An A student is a leading player in any class, an integral voice, and the class cannot make its music without that voice."

As leaders, let us be more generous in giving others an A.

Exercises

Let's try these exercises of Giving an A.

1. At the start of each day or week, give yourself an A. Describe your expectations of how your day would go. This is like a to-do list with a twist. Don't just list down the things that you like or need to do but how very well you would do it. Also, write everything in past tense, as if they have already happened.

2. Every time you have to do something special, e.g. make a presentation to a client or a boss, give yourself an A. Describe, in past tense and in glowing terms, what happened in that occasion.

This is guaranteed to amaze yourself. Try it and enter the Universe of Possibility. Watch people bloom and reveal their best.

Feedback on Collins

Thanks for this insightful feedback from Lorna Chua:

"Your article touched on a subject matter which has been bothering me for so long. In my several short travels to US, I have observed this culture thing. At first, *nanibago ako*. I tried to compare the two cultures, noted the good and bad points in each. What I admired most in them is their discipline. We don't have that here. What I like here is our fear of God. They have less of that there.

"When you asked Jim Collins-"What's wrong with being good? What's wrong with number 2? All that really matters in this world is your relationship with Him." -he was not able to answer you right away because you asked him a "culture" question. *Tayo lang Pilipino makakaunawa dun dahil sa atin*, No. 1 *ang Diyos. Sa kanila* No. 1 *ang* achievement. I am able to empathize with you because I was brought up here with God as No. 1.

"I haven't read Jim Collins but I surmise he's speaking in terms of achievements. I don't know if we Filipinos will ever attain his measure of what is 'great.' Our regionalism is pulling us down. We have so many dialects, *hindi na tayo magkaintindihan. Kapira-kapiraso pang isla bago mo malibot ang buong Pilipinas*. Sigh! It's religion that binds us together. Yehey!

"Throughout a decade of traveling/comparing both cultures, I still love the Philippines and the Filipinos. My heart bleeds for the poor who keep on toiling just to make ends meet. I do my part by working hard as a civil servant."

Invitation

YOU ARE INVITED. Best selling author Bob Rosner will surely share with you more of how you could give yourself and others an A when he comes here to do "12 Steps to Better Bossing" and "Managing Against the Odds." This will happen on August 15 at the Equitable PCIBank Tower 1, Makati City. I shall do the introductory presentatios on "Innovating for Leading Edge Management" and "Innovating for Peak Performance."

AND the next day, August 16, join me in a 12-hour Innovation Camp at the Makati Sports Club. Release your innovative and creative juices.

Register at Optimus Managers & Advisors (phone no. 414-0186) or any Inquirer Classified Ads branch now.

(Send feedback to Moje.Ramos@Aquino.ZZN.com)

email: peopleatwork@Inquirer.com.ph

PEOPLE at WORK

Editor Raul O. Marcelo ◎ Subsection Editor Regina Galang Reyes

'Prophecies' of leaders, media can be self-fulfilling

RECIPES for LEARNING

Moje Ramos-Aquino

LAST Monday, a morning television show asked the viewers something like, "*Naniniwala ka ba na ang Pilipinas na ang kidnap capital ng mundo*?" The answer unfortunately was a 2:1 vote in favor of "yes." I am wondering why the show came up with such a survey question and what they will use the results for. Is there a need to ask such question? What message are they trying to convey to their viewers? What corporate values are they trying to share?

I am also wondering why those who responded to the survey answered the way they did and still can go about their lives declaring themselves Filipinos.

Can you imagine what the millions of Filipinos and people of other nations, especially those who are not in the country and don't know the real score, would be thinking about when they learn about such survey results? Is kidnapping now a part of our culture? Or has Philippine-bashing become ordinary entertainment fare or rating booster?

Power to influence

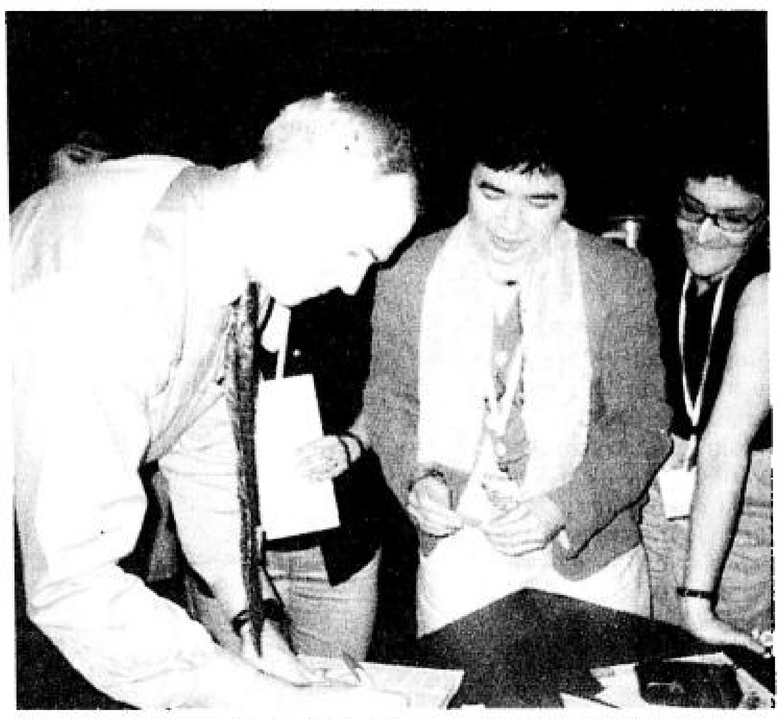
Leadership is the power to influence the thoughts of others and make them want what the leader wants.

It is akin to the Self-fulfilling Prophesy or Pygmalion Effect that works this way:

1. We form our expectations of people or events or even of ourselves. As leaders, we make clear our organizational and personal vision, mission, values and goals.

2. We communicate these expectations either directly or with various cues. Every word, action, behavior, habit or even casual re-

'PROPHECIES'/ p. B11



Good to Great author Jim Collins signing the book for the author

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Represented in photo are sponsors Microdata Systems and Management, Inc., McGraw Hill Education, Power Books, Single Search Philippines, Metro Working Mom, Optimus Managers & Advisors, Inc., Paradigms & Paradoxes Consultants, INQ7 Interactive Inc. Joining them (third from right, first row) is Inquirer president Sandy Romualdez.

Northwest Airlines flies Rosner to Manila

NORTHWEST Airlines and McGraw Hill Education sign up as corporate sponsors for the People at Work Live! Seminar Series this August, "Bob Rosner Live! in Manila." Northwest Airlines general manager Laurie Lofgren and McGraw Hill's general manager Estela Suyat approved the sponsorship for the series.

Bob Rosner, best-selling author, syndicated columnist and motivational speaker, will be coming to Manila to give seminars on "12 Steps to Better Bossing" and "Managing Against the Odds (Advice for the Working Wounded) on Aug. 15 at the Santiago Hall, Mezzanine, Equitable PCI Bank Tower 1, Makati Ave., Makati City.

As a bonus for people at work, Recipes for Learning columnist Moje Ramos-Aquino will do a "front act" on Innovation for free before each of Rosner's seminars. Then, she will hold a back-to-back act the day after Rosner's seminars on August 16 entitled Innovation Camp at a modest fee.

Companies who care for people at work have subsidized this program to make it accessible to the public at popular ticket prices. Call tel. no. 414-0186 to register or visit any PDI Classified Ads branch.

Seated from left are Juan Reyes Jr., Optimus Managers & Advisors Inc. president; Rene Reinoso, Inquirer SVP for Sales and Marketing; Adin Gonzales, Northwest Airlines Marketing Communications manager. Standing are Donald Lim, Inquirer Marketing Services head and Regina Reyes, People at Work editor. JOAN BONDOC

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C1

DUNKIN' DONUTS
COFFEE on the GO!
DUNKIN' DONUTS

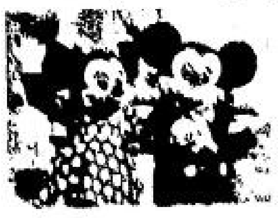
Iconsofthisgeneration

You will know a generation by its idols. Take a look at the gods that the younger generation worship and realize how things change yet remain the same

CHILDHOOD

Sesame Street. Up to this day, we *still* don't know how to get to Sesame Street. At least we know Snuffie is Birdie's best imaginary friend. Er, you did know that, didn't you?

Mickey Mouse. At least he has evolved. Look, now he's got pants!



Voltes V. You were seriously deprived as a child if you never owned a Voltes V toy.

Batibot. Admit it, you used to squeal at the sight of Pong Pagong.

Hello Kitty. We remember collecting her stickers as children, and now she even has a new tan.

Barbie Doll. Banish those who say her figure is not realistic. We love her many dresses and accessories!

MUSIC

Eraserheads. No one has captured the beauty of Filipino culture like this band..."*Minsan sa may Kalayaan tayo'y nagkatagpuan...*"

U2. They went down the disco lane, but we'll forgive them.

'N Sync. Blame Hanson and the Spice Girls for this.

Mariah Carey. We hate her, but she's an icon.

Alanis Morissette. She inspired a bagillion of girls to pick up the guitar and show their diaries to the public. She put back the "power" in girl power.

Britney Spears. A true performer, the Madonna of today's music. A chameleon who morphs from sweet schoolgirl to naughty sex kitten in video after video. Awww yeah!

Madonna. Need we say more?

Michael Jackson. Black or white, he *is* the Prince of Pop.

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PIC KISS3
PIC MISSDOG2
PIC PAYONG1
PIC PAYONG3
PIC TURTLE3
LOGO SEE
288
LOGO RECEIVED

If you can avert your eyes from her for a minute, check out the hottest logos, ring tones and picture messages from July 3 to 8. After that you can go back to appreciating her.

Top ten logos: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

New logos:

New picture messages:

New ring tones:

Brand New Man	*Brooks and Dunn*	**TONE BRANDNEW1**
Insatiable	*Darren Hayes*	**TONE INSATIABLE**
Jezebel	*Chely Wright*	**TONE JEZEBEL**
Killing Me Softly With His Song	*Roberta Flack, Fugees*	**TONE KILLINGME**
Marrakesh Express	*Crosby, Stills & Nash*	**TONE MARRAKESH**
Solo En Ti (Only you)	*Enrique Iglesias*	**TONE ONLYYOU**
Games People Play	*Joe South*	**TONE PIPOLPLAY**
Teach Your Children	*Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young*	**TONE TEACHUR**
We Don't Talk Anymore	*Cliff Richard*	**TONE WEDONTTALK**
Wired For Sound	*Cliff Richard*	**TONE WIREDFOR**

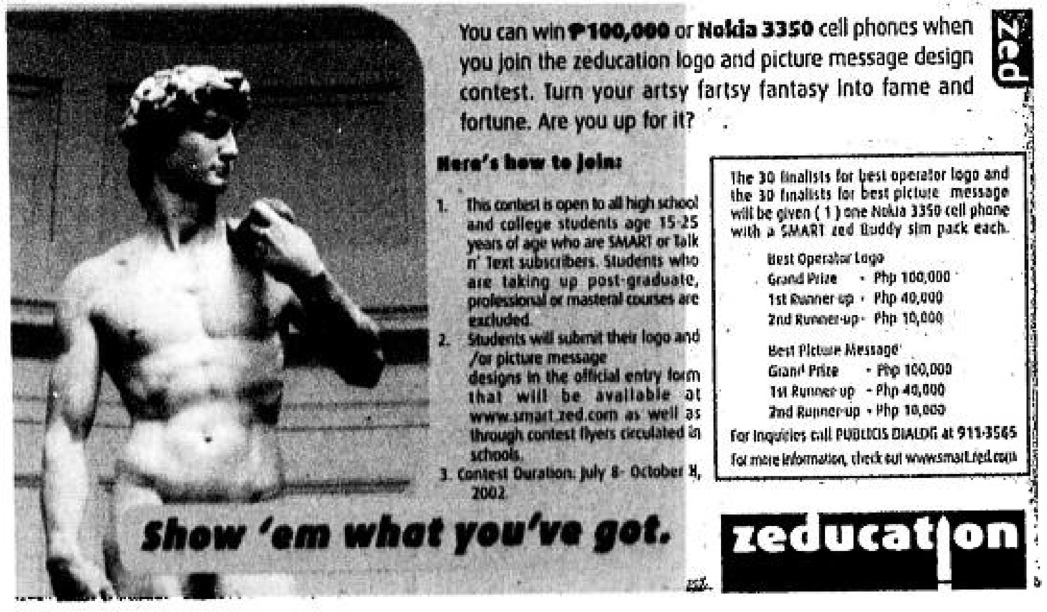
Top ten ring tones:

1	Baby I'm Yours	*Patricia Javier*	**TONE BABY**
2	Say My Name	*Destiny's Child*	**TONE SAYMYNAME**
3	Heaven By Your Side	*A1*	**TONE HEAVENBY**
4	Kahit Kailan	*South Border*	**TONE KAHITKLAN**
5	Ain't It Funny	*Jennifer Lopez*	**TONE AINTITFUN**
6	Blue Jeans	*Apo Hiking Society*	**TONE BLUEJEANS**
7	Macho Guwapito	*Rico Puno*	**TONE MACHO**
8	My Girl	*Westlife*	**TONE MYGIRL**
9	Run Away	*Del Shannon*	**TONE RUNAWAY**
10	Build Me Up, Buttercup	*Sound Alike*	**TONE BUTTERCUP**

How to get a logo, picture message or ring tone:

1 Type in KEYWORD Ex. LOGO SEE, PIC KISS2 or TONE BABY
2 Send to 288
3 Save upon receiving logo, picture message, or ring tone

Available exclusively to SMART Gold, SMART Buddy and Talk 'N Text subscribers for selected Nokia cell phones. P15.00 per successful download. To get random keywords of zed logos, type in **RANDOMLOGO** and send to 288. To get random keywords of zed ring tones, type in **RANDOMTONE**. For keywords of other zed services, type in **KEYS** and send to 288.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You can win **₱100,000** or **Nokia 3350** cell phones when you join the zeducation logo and picture message design contest. Turn your artsy fartsy fantasy into fame and fortune. Are you up for it?

Here's how to join:

1. This contest is open to all high school and college students age 15-25 years of age who are SMART or Talk n' Text subscribers. Students who are taking up post-graduate, professional or masteral courses are excluded.
2. Students will submit their logo and /or picture message designs in the official entry form that will be available at www.smart.zed.com as well as through contest flyers circulated in schools.
3. Contest Duration: July 8- October 8, 2002.

The 30 finalists for best operator logo and the 30 finalists for best picture message will be given (1) one Nokia 3350 cell phone with a SMART zed Buddy sim pack each.

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1st Runner up - Php 40,000
2nd Runner-up - Php 10,000

Best Picture Message
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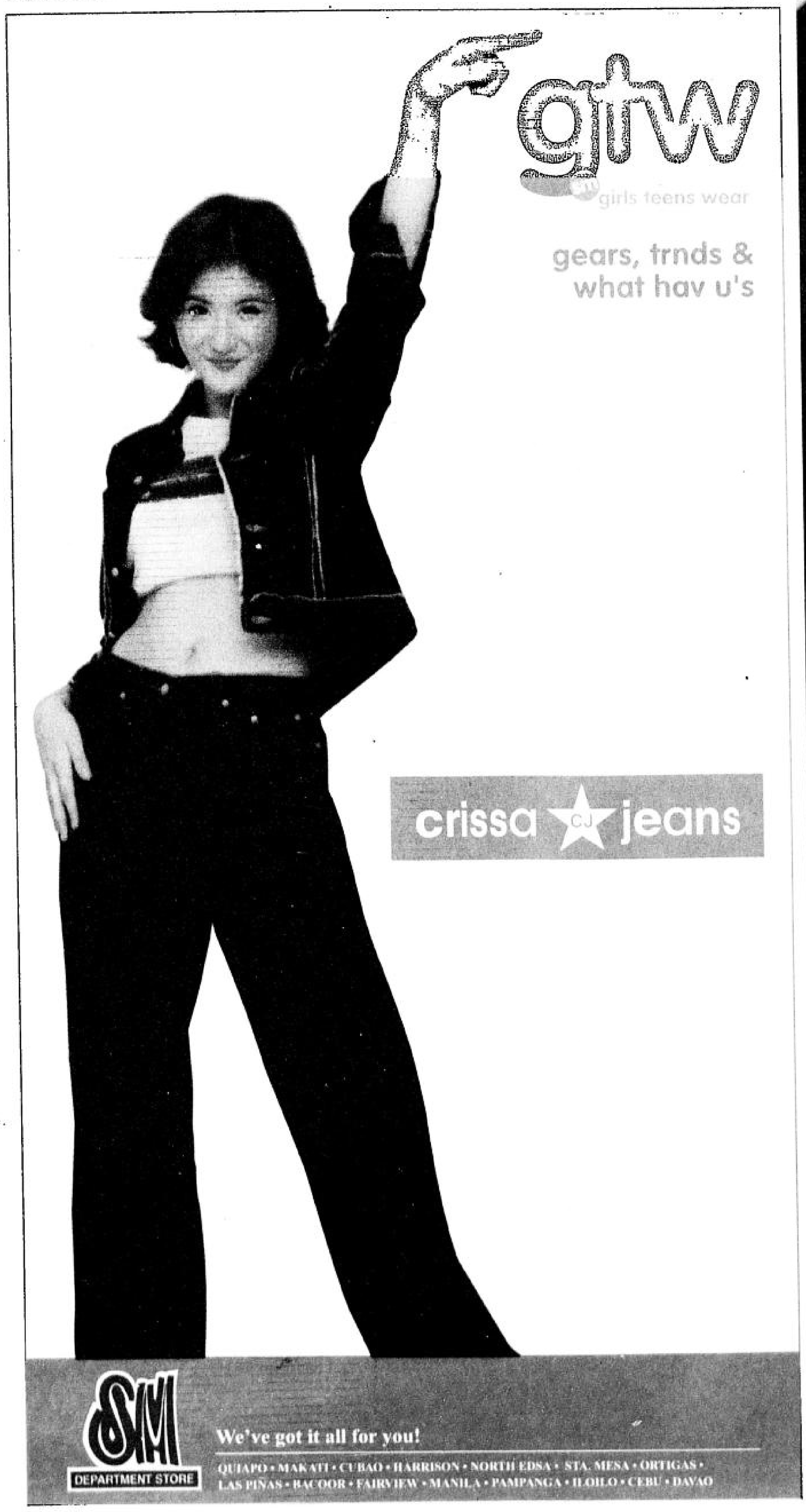
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Iconsofthisgeneration

SPORTS

Michael Jordan. No explanations needed.

Michael Schumacher. Despite recent controversies, he undoubtedly remains an icon, especially to boys with a passion for speed.

Ronaldo Luiz Nazario de Lima. Jersey No. 9, Ronaldo of the Brazil football team was named FIFA's World Footballer of the Year in 1996 and 1997, becoming the youngest player to win the award and the only player to win the award for two consecutive years.

David Beckham. "Becks," English football player and a longtime star of the legendary Manchester United.

Michelle Kwan. Since 1992, Michelle has competed in approximately 90 competitions, winning 54 golds, 24 silvers and 6 bronzes.

Efren "Bata" Reyes. How many billiards players have no teeth but have that many commercials?

Tiger Woods. He made watching golf not boring.—*Lui Villarico*

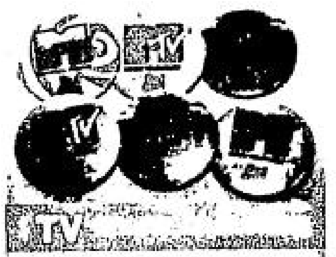
MOVIES

Freddy Krueger. One, two, Freddy's coming after you...

Clueless. This like, launched the careers of Bettys like, Alicia Silverstone.

Titanic. It sank. But it kept Leo afloat for a few more movies.

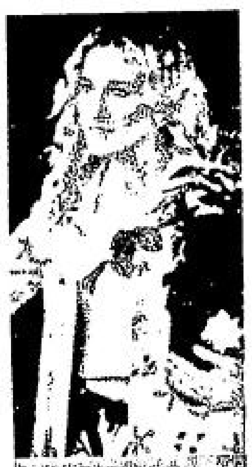
TV



"Sex and the City." Chief reason why we're glued to our TV sets every Tuesday night.

MTV. It gets cheesier every year, but it *is* music with visuals.

FASHION



Gwyneth Paltrow. The Jackie O. of our generation.

Levi's. Denim never goes out of style, ergo, Levi's always churns out the latest styles.

Carrie Bradshaw. Admit it—you sometimes watch the show because of the clothes.

Jolina Magdangal. Laugh at her all you want, but she's laughing all the way to the bank.

Lenny Kravitz. We love Rock n' Roll. And anything Lenny wears.

—*Maui Reyes*

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LITERATURE

Jessica Zafra. She gave Gen X a voice—a very strong one.

F. Sionil Jose. One of the country's strongest assets in literature, he is legendary for his moving fiction and his social conscience.

Roald Dahl. Author of famous children's books such as "James and the Giant Peach," "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory," and "The Witches." His bad experiences with school authorities led him to write stories in which children fight the cruelties of adults.

Gabriel Garcia Marquez. Colombian writer whose unique storytelling has given impetus to magical realism, fantastic fiction that reflects the exotic sensibility of the Latin Americans.

JK Rowling. She brought magic to the world.

J. R. Tolkien. Author of "Lord of the Rings" and a lord unto himself.

—*Cathy Young*

DEAN, Monroe, Sinatra and Hepburn

The original icons

Frank Sinatra, James Dean, Audrey Hepburn and the Beatles—they set the standards of icon worship

By Armin Adina
PDI Research Department

LONG before Britney Spears rocked the world and girls swooned over the Backstreet Boys and 'N Sync, there were superstars who enjoyed even greater adulation.

Appearing in only three feature films in a little over a year's time, **James Dean** remains one of the most-admired stars who ever lived. Blessed with both endearing looks and unfathomable talent, he became every girl's dream boy.

In his brief career, Dean personified the restless American youth, thus gaining an iconic status. He also set the leather jacket trend and greased-hair look.

Dean's fascination for fast cars proved fatal for him. He died in a car accident at age 24 (he was driving 115 miles per hour). It was after his death that he became larger than life.

Marilyn Monroe was a walking Barbie doll, the epitome of the all-American bombshell. She was every man's fantasy and every woman's envy. Monroe capitalized on her dumb-blonde image in pushing her fame. For her, vital statistics were indeed very vital.

Though short-lived, her life and loves were colorful. She married baseball star Joe DiMaggio and later, literary great Arthur Miller. She was linked to Frank Sinatra and rumored to several Kennedys.

Her 1962 suicide at age 35 raised several suspicions. Hers was a Cinderella story with a bad ending. But her legend lives on.

For revolutionizing the standards of acting, **Marlon Brando**'s debut was greeted with a rousing applause. He was virtually unknown when he starred in "A Streetcar Named Desire," but his performance pushed the boundaries of acting.

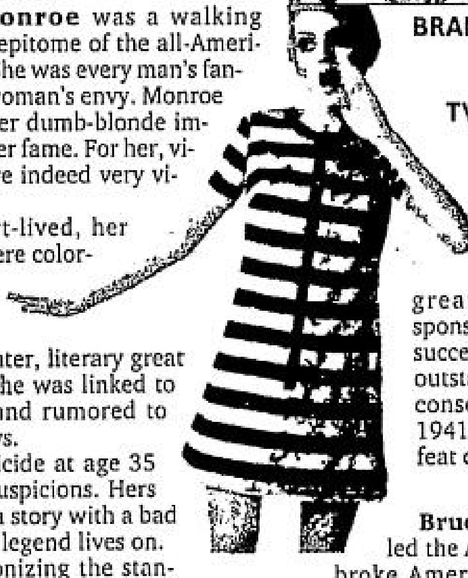
Fiery lady

Touted as "the First Lady of the American Screen," **Bette Davis** did to actresses what Brando did to actors—set a new standard.

She was beautiful and talented, a perfect formula for success. But she was also strong and determined, something that was not expected of the women of her time. But these were virtues that made her unique and different. Aside from reaping Oscars, she also became the highest paid woman in America.

Considered the greatest traditional pop vocalist of the 20th century, **Frank Sinatra**'s career as a performer covered more than half a century. "The Chairman of the Board" will be remembered for the standards "My Way" and New York, New York."

BRANDO



TWIGGY

Twiggy Lawson was, perhaps, the first supermodel. Through her, the waif look became the standard of beauty across the globe. Her facial features were highly regarded, especially her deeply expressive eyes. It was also because of her that almost all women owned miniskirts and fishnet stockings.

Joe DiMaggio is one great baseball player who is partly responsible for the game's commercial success. "The Yankee Clipper" copped outstanding feats in the field. His 56 consecutive game hitting streak in 1941 was considered the top baseball feat of all time.

Asian trailblazer

Bruce Lee was a success story. He led the Asian invasion of Hollywood. He broke Americans' stereotype of Asians as house servants and railroad workers.

His martial arts skills were his claim to fame. "The Dragon" became rich and famous by inflicting injury on people in front of the camera. He died a mysterious death, but he will be forever revered for inspiring fellow Asians to dream of international superstardom.

Her grace, charm and beauty characterized Hollywood glamour. Gifted with a disarmingly beautiful face and good fashion sense, **Audrey Hepburn** was a sight to behold.

The Oscar-winning Hepburn is best remembered for her portrayals on the films "Breakfast at Tiffany's," "My Fair Lady," "Roman Holiday" and "Charade."

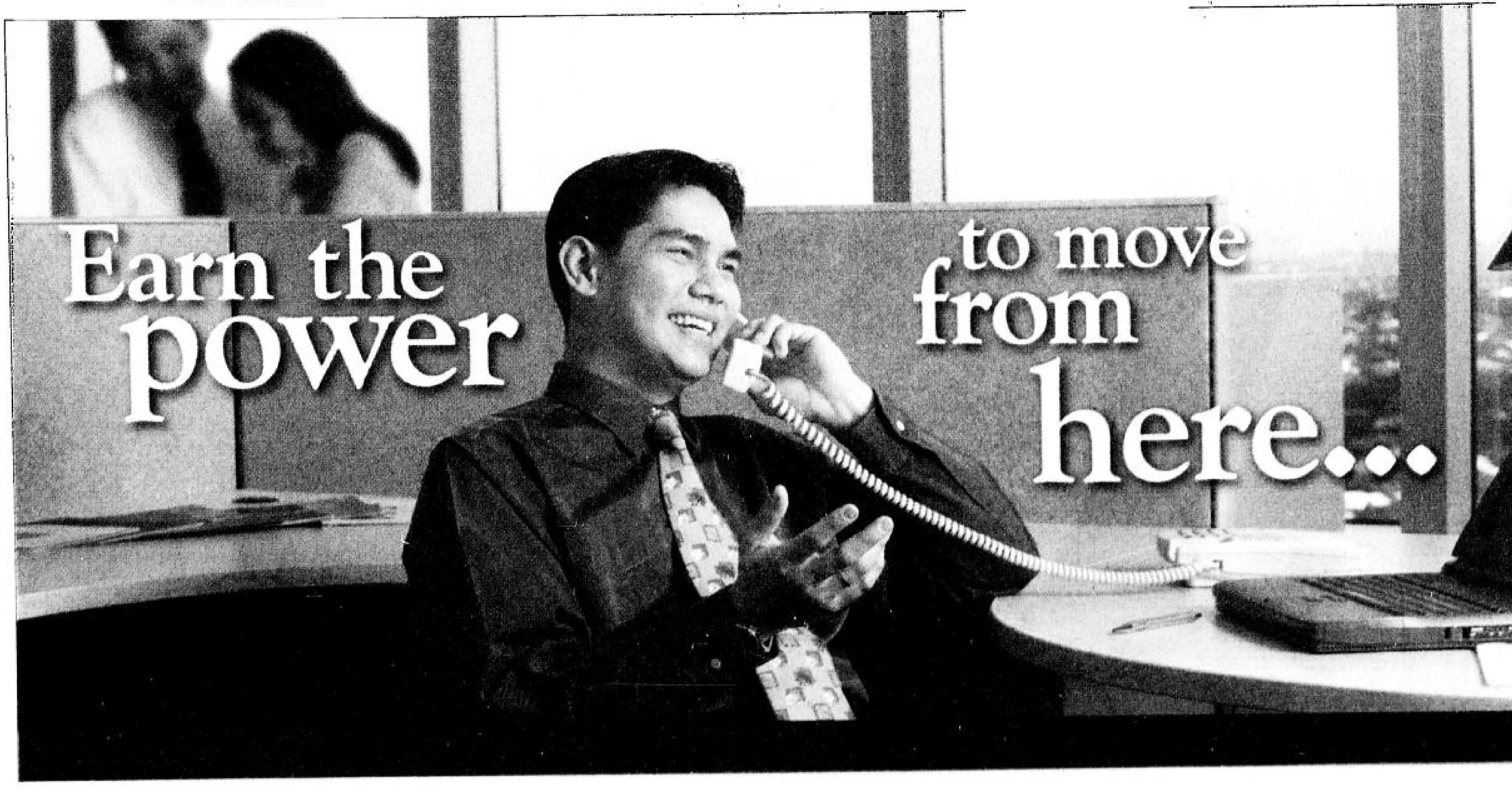
As a Unicef ambassador, she devoted the last years of her life to the crusade for children's rights. She succumbed to colon cancer in 1993.

The Beatles are undeniably the most successful group in pop music history. Long before the boy-band phenomenon of the late '90s, women were screaming frantically over these boys in the 1960s. And the Beatles were truly a band, perhaps the most innovative force in popular music in the 20th century.

They set the trend of sporting mopped hairs and bell-bottom pants. Moreover, they have 10 Guinness World Records under their belt, including best-selling group ever, most number of albums on the US chart, most number of hit international albums, and most number of consecutive No. 1 hits.

They were irrefutably talented musicians. Their music has become the benchmark for other artists as well. If they're not icons, no one else is.

THE BEATLES



Deconstructing an icon

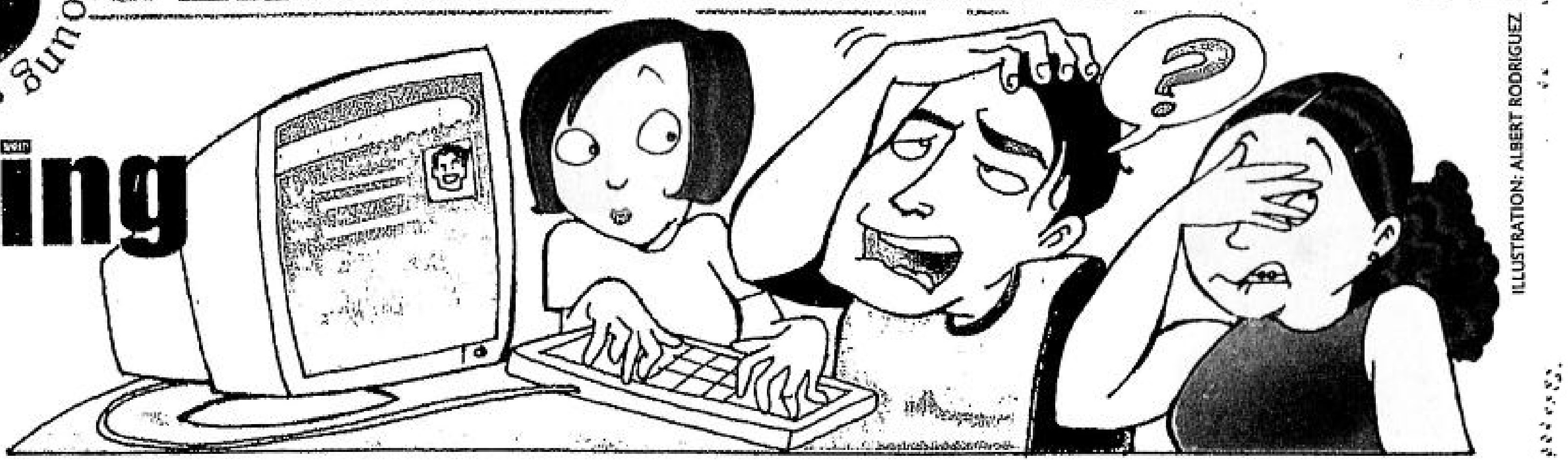


ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

By Pam Pastor

The author used to adore this teen actor—until she met him

WHEN I was younger and therefore more superficial, a person needed only one thing to become my crush—the cute factor. The presence of killer eyes, make-me-drool smile, pinch-me rosy cheeks and adorable dimples killed the need for wit, intelligence and a sense of responsibility.

So when Major Hottie, a new young actor, paraded before me on television one afternoon, one look at his face was enough for me to declare him as my crush-of-the-moment.

Apparently I wasn't alone.

Battles ensued among my classmates in the all-girls' high school that I went to—who was cuter, him or his co-stars in a popular TV show? Forget the fact that we used to turn up our noses at local shows. Even our maids swooned over him. At that moment, he had become an icon of sorts for teenyboppers and gushy females.

Since I wasn't the stalker type and would not resort to following him around to get his autograph, I had resigned myself to the knowledge that he would exist only in my mind and my TV—or so I thought.

Just a few years later, after I started writing for this paper, our paths crossed.

I had been actively covering the celebrity chats of a website during that time. I must have just finished one of my interviews or dropped by the site's office to get something I forgot.

Major Hottie was getting ready to chat when he was introduced to me. Although he was no longer my crush (I had moved on to real people by then) and his career had pretty much slowed down, one could not deny that Major Hottie still looked pretty damn hot.

He smiled and shook my hand. My contact at the website asked me to stay and watch him chat. So I did.

I stood behind him, looking at the screen. There was another member of the website staff sitting beside him, fingers posed above the keyboard, ready to type what Major Hottie wanted to say to his cyber-savvy fans. That was no big deal—there are tons of celebrities who can't type fast or type at all and therefore need the assistance of experienced keyboard magicians. This is understandable, as their answers have to be quick to keep up with the questions that keep streaming in.

But apparently, not only was Major Hottie a slow typist, he was also completely ignorant when it came to the World Wide Web. After long minutes of staring at the screen, he turned to another website staff member, who was standing beside me, and said, "*And 'to? Ganito rin ba ang nakikita nila* (his fans) *sa* screen?"

Groan.

Still, there are tons of people who are computer illiterate. His lack of knowledge was acceptable—although a disappointment to me because I've always been a technology junkie.

The big turn off was the fact that he couldn't answer the questions himself. "I love you, (Major Hottie's real name)!!!" a fan wrote in big bold letters. He turned to his manager who was sandwiched between me and the website staff member and asked, "I love you, too? *Pwede ba yun*?"

Duh.

This went on—he constantly had to ask his manager what to say, even if the questions were personal and not at all sensitive ("Boxers or briefs?" "Favorite food?"). His manager must be OC about his image, I thought. These celebrities totally live on image, so that was still forgivable.

But then came the clincher.

"(Major Hottie's name), I like you because you've got something between your ears," another adoring fan wrote.

The world seemed to stop. Major Hottie turned to us, his gorgeous brow furrowed, a look of complete confusion on his face. "Something between my ears? *Ano yun?*"

Oh. My. God. And to think Major Hottie graduated from a pretty decent school.

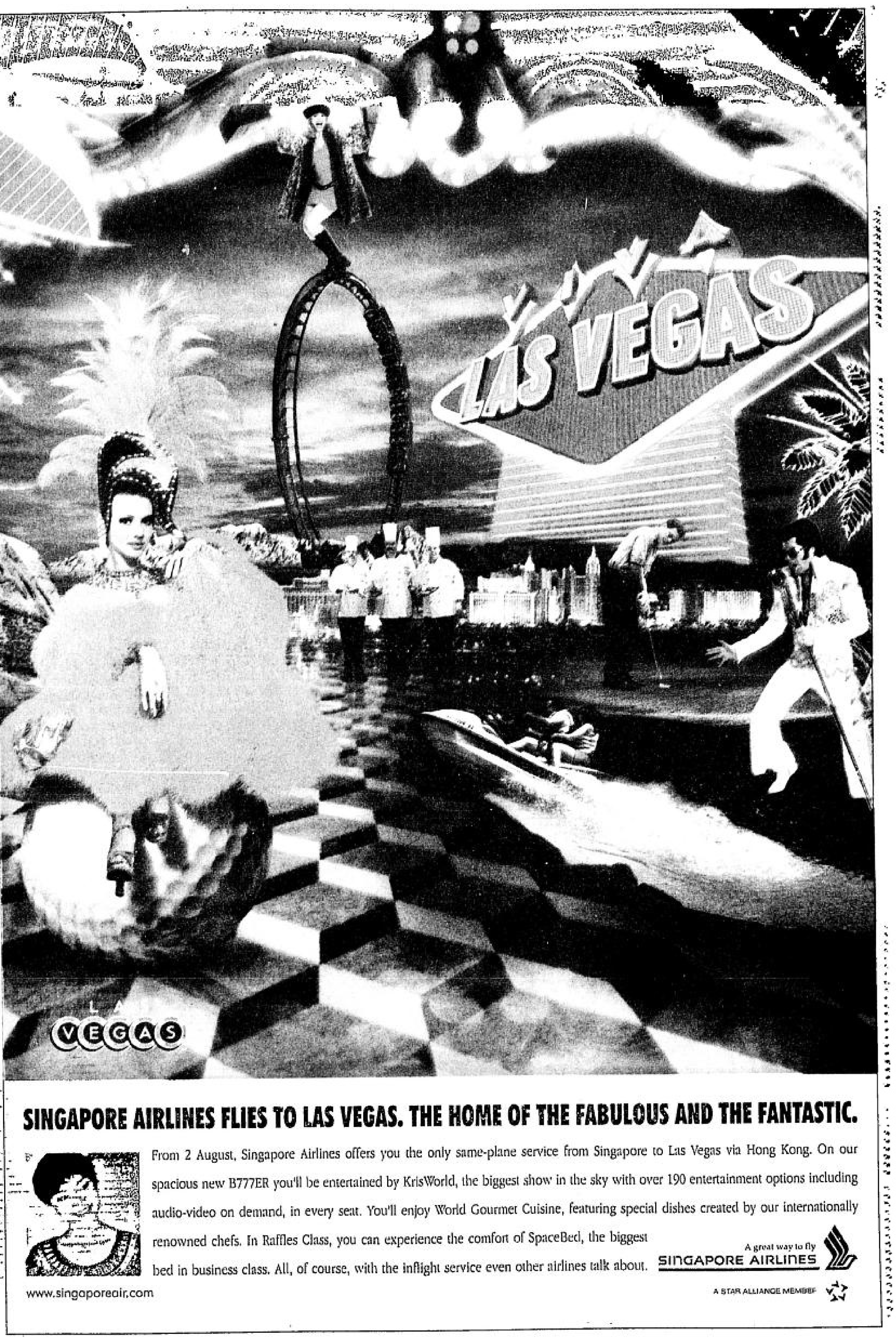
I couldn't believe this guy used to be the subject of my dreams. I couldn't believe I used to have arguments with friends about him. I couldn't believe I imagined bearing his children. No way, I do not wish to have IQ-challenged offsprings.

I texted a friend. "Thank God m not interviewng dis guy."

That day, he knocked himself off the pedestal I had built for him.

That day, he became my ex-icon.

E-mail the author at ppastor@inquirer.com.ph (Note: No amount of spam will force me to spill the young actor's identity)



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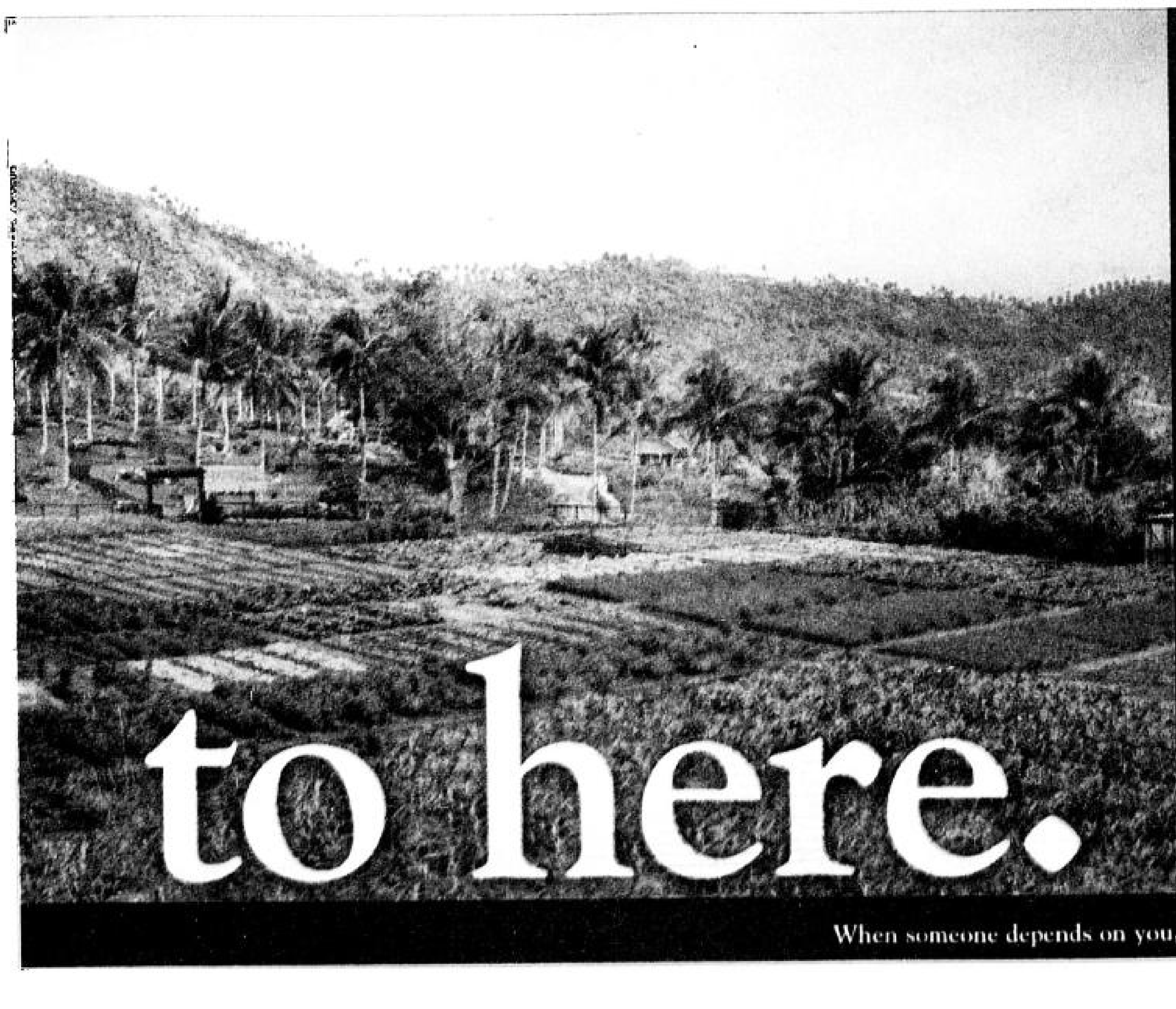

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Close encounters of the *iconic kind*

A self-confessed fan reveals his uncontainable enthusiasm for his personal idols, who may or may not reciprocate his

By Niño Mark M. Sablan
2bU! Correspondent

1 In a back-to-back free concert in a mall, my music icon Cynthia Alexander was to perform together with a popular band. She was singing her last song when I arrived. Many were yawning and I wanted to smack their heads. When I reached backstage, she was entertaining a shy group of fans and I just couldn't help but scream her name out of pure happiness and excitement. "Cynthia! Cynthia!" I screamed like a Cecilia or Carlos Miguel fanatic. Instantly, she noticed my eyes (which were extra tantalizing because of black eyeliner). "*Ang ganda-ganda naman ng mga mata mo*," she remarked, and I hopped up and down like a bunny on a pogostick. I asked for her autograph, but as I searched my bag for paper and pen, the only things I found were a bingo flyer and my black eyeliner. Extremely humiliated, I handed her my stuff. She gave me the smile of all smiles and then scribbled something on the crumpled paper. It could've been just a dot, but still it was more priceless than a Dranreb Belleza painting. I expressed my gratitude and hopped away happily, her comment about my eyes lingering on my mind.

Realization: Even the smallest observation or most nonsensical comment your icon makes about you is definitely record-material.

2 Peering from the glass window of a bookstore, I saw Jessica Zafra, local literary goddess, crossing the street with her sister. Instantly, I darted downstairs and welcomed her, as soon as the guard opened the door. "Oh my god, oh my god! I'm such a huge fan! You don't know how much you inspire me! You're my goddess, you're my goddess! I'm not worthy!" I blurted. To which she gave me a very pained face and said, "Okay." She left me and joined her fellow writer-guests to talk about the night's event, a Q and A thing wherein they spill stuff about their lives as writers. Before the program started I was able to ask her to sign my copies of her book. "What's your name?" she asked monotonously. "Mark! Mark! Mark!" I announced quite excitedly. "Okay, with a 'c' or with a 'k'?" she inquired monotonously. "Mark! Mark! Mark!" I repeated. "With a 'c' or with a 'k'?" she snapped, louder and with more passion this time. "With a 'k', with a 'k'!" I quickly said, hoping she wouldn't think I was such an imbecile.

Months after our first meeting, we bumped into each other again in the same bookstore. "Hi. Mark, right?" she said to my surprise. "Yeah," I flashed a Beam toothpaste smile, trying to conceal my obvious ecstasy. "Jessica Zafra, right?"

Realization: One of the most fulfilling things is for your idol to remember your name. If she spells your name correctly, then it's so much better.

3 Coming from guesting in Jessica Zafra's show, Karen Kunawicz was like a lost ghost. Detached but observant. Quiet, mysterious and intriguing. This made me want to meet her more. When I spotted her stuck with a Mr. Negative Energy, somebody who looked like a car salesman, I took my cue and introduced myself as a fan, a follower. Since Karen's focus shifted to me, Mr. Salesman might have felt left out. He took his exit, much to my goddess' delight. After an autograph, she excused herself. I was crushed.

After a couple of years later, I bumped bellybuttons with her at a book launch. She didn't seem to remember who I was and strangely enough, I was cool with that. The wonderful thing is that, unexpectedly, we had a lengthy, meaty conversation that was full of giggles and nods. We even talked about certain things that were, at a certain point, personal, but she didn't mind sharing them with someone whom she didn't really know. I was tickled pink, mostly because we made a connection. It was the ultimate fulfillment of a fan. Discovering that you and someone you've built a shrine for share common grounds is indeed heartening. However, after a couple of snapshots, she excused herself, the way she did the last time. But it didn't hurt anymore. I didn't feel betrayed, I was already wiser, more mature.

One thing I remember about the encounter is that afterwards, someone approached me and asked, "Are you Karen's brother?" That tickled me pink for the longest time. I'm still giggling.

Realization: Icons are real people, they have their own lives, too. They go through ups and downs just like their fans. They're definitely not perfect, but they can really be amazing.

4 I was flipping through the papers and I wailed like Mariah when I saw Chuck Lambino's cellphone number dancing in front of me. But even if I so desired to connect with him at that instant, I hesitated. I wanted it to be special, I wanted to have a reason. Several months passed and on V-Day, I sent him a text message. I said I was sending him Laguz (rune for love) and that I was thankful for his existence, that by merely living, he inspired me so much. Imagine my surprise when in the middle of one of my classes, my cellphone rang, much to the dismay of my prof (I was a bad boy I know). It was Chuck. He thanked me for the message and invited me to attend the launch of his latest book. I didn't go, though. I don't know why. I had the opportunity to meet one of my fave authors and I just decided to be an "Indyan."

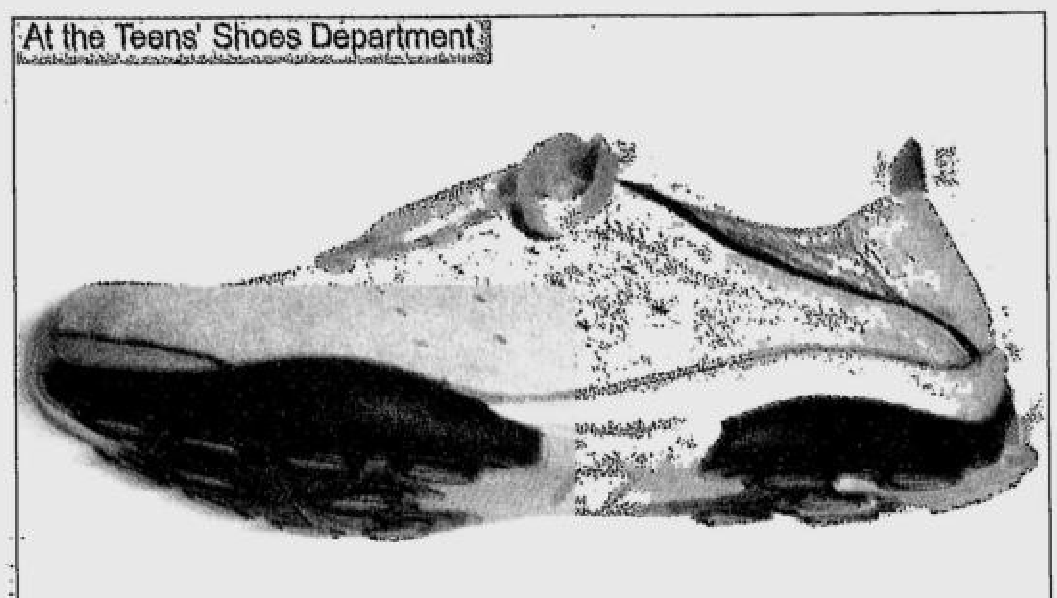
After a year or so, I attended the launching of his new book. He didn't recognize me; I didn't introduce myself. I gave him a letter, though, and it contained a bunch of poems inspired by him. After signing my copies with unique ink, I thanked him and checked out the stuff in the gallery. All of a sudden, I heard Chuck, "Katot, Katot..." Oh my God, he was actually calling me! Very unexpectedly, he handed me a framed artwork of his and I just couldn't contain my gratitude, I had to thank him again and again. (I later found out the work was priced impressively. More importantly, I discovered it was his fave piece.)

When I got home that night, we instantly exchanged text messages. I got to know my icon. I had never imagined it would be possible. He invited me to a lot of his gigs, but unfortunately, I just didn't have the time. His messages became fewer and fewer until one day, my personal god stopped texting me.

Realization: An icon may mean the whole world to you. But there are times when an icon is just an icon and a romantic relationship with him is just not possible.

E-mail the fan-less author at katotino@yahoo.com

At the Teens' Shoes Department



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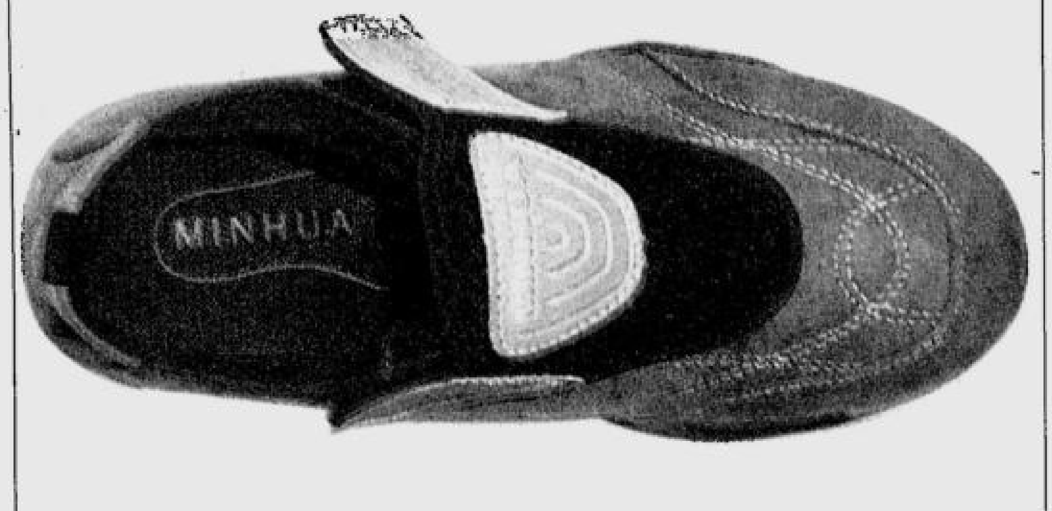

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LIFESTYLE

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I sat at the concert altar of Britney Spears

Here's a firsthand report on pop music's biggest teen star, her Chicago super concert and her glittering bellybutton

Text and photos by Charley Bautista
2bU! Correspondent

I AM still in shock that I was able to watch Britney Spears, probably the world's biggest pop star. I was in a daze at the United Center in downtown Chicago as I lined up to enter the arena at 7 p.m. on June 20. Around me were people of all ages: 5-year-olds accompanied by their fathers and mothers, teenage girls with their boyfriends, the twentysomething crowd (where I fell in) and even curious senior citizens—all had come to see Britney in her "Dream Within a Dream Tour 2002."

Who wouldn't be fascinated with Britney? She is touted to be the next Madonna, the biggest icon of her generation. I had always wondered what made Britney tick with the generation Y audience, and I figured the credit went to her natural, girl-next-door charm. It also helped that she had a kick-ass figure and a style all her own that other performers had tried to emulate.

For a 24-year-old like me, it was the fact that she's all of 20 and the "biggest star of the world," as L.L. Cool J called her when they cohosted the American Music Awards last year.

Look at what she's done: Her three albums have all made it to No. 1; she's had over 10 No. 1 singles; she has become the No. 1 Most Powerful Celebrity, according to Forbes magazine; she starred, produced and cowrote her own movie, "Crossroads"; she cowrote a book with her mother (never mind if the last two were flops). She's also probably the most watched celebrity, with her on-and-off rela-

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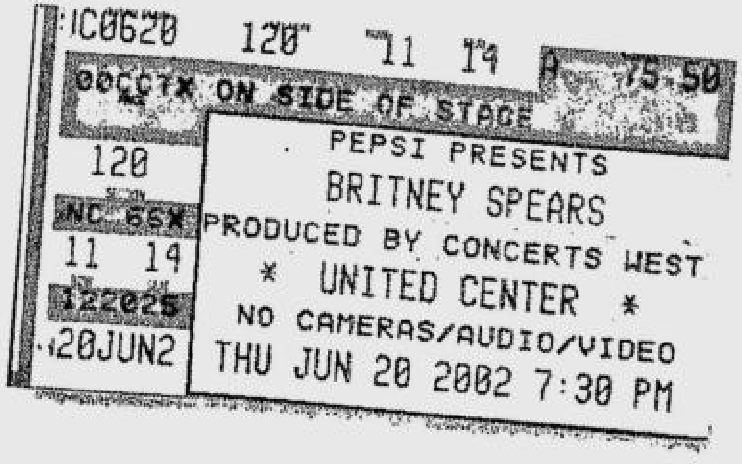

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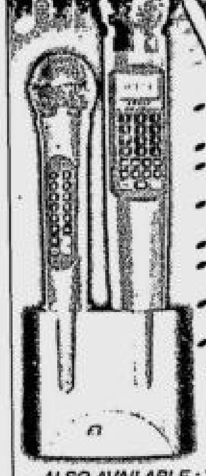

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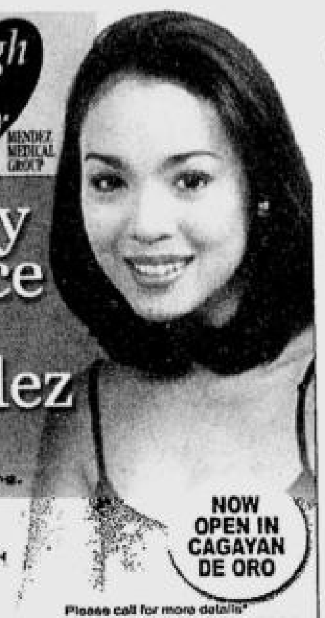

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Robinsons Galleria

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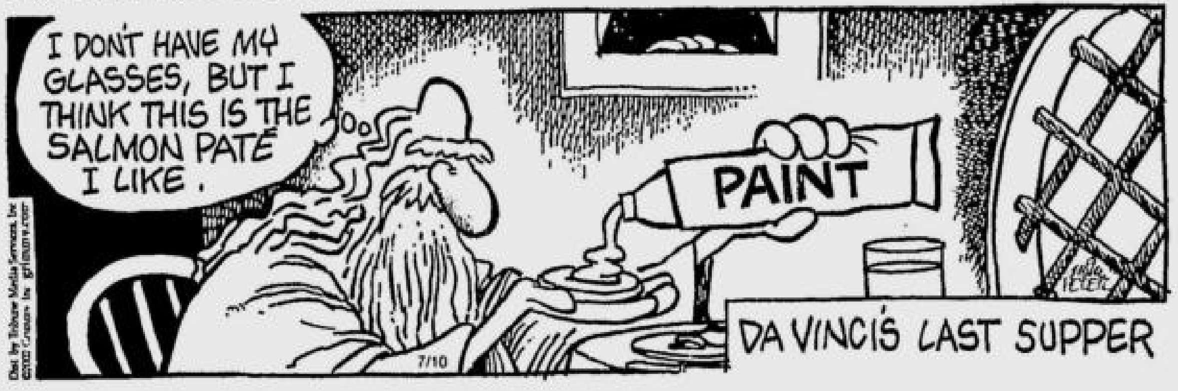
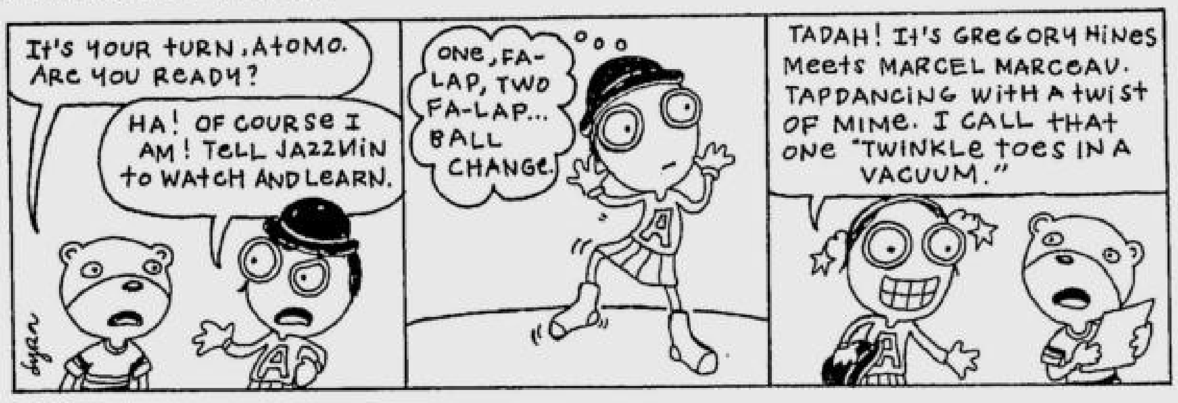
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


I DON'T HAVE MY GLASSES, BUT I THINK THIS IS THE SALMON PATÉ I LIKE.
PAINT
DA VINCI'S LAST SUPPER
7/10

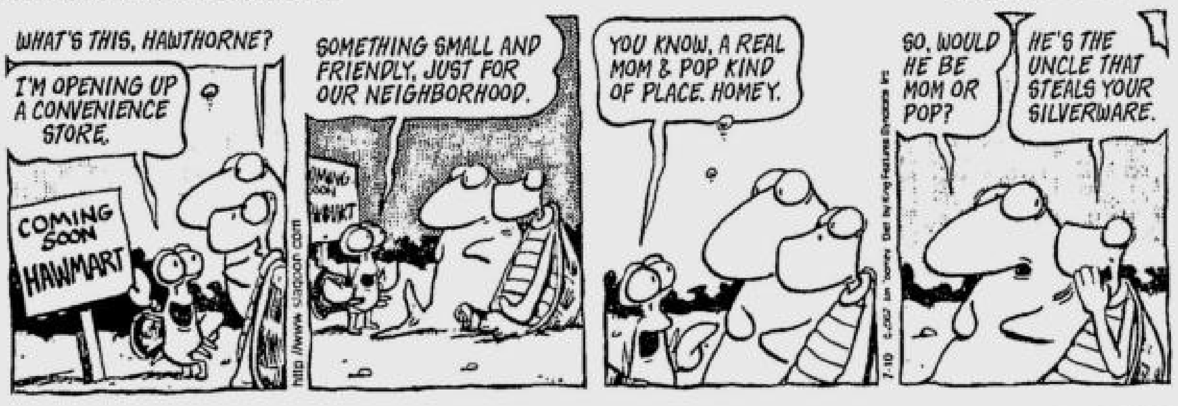
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


It's your turn, Atomo. Are you ready?
HA! Of course I am! Tell Jazzmin to watch and learn.
One, fa-lap, two fa-lap... ball change.
TADAH! It's Gregory Hines meets Marcel Marceau. Tapdancing with a twist of mime. I call that one "Twinkle toes in a vacuum."

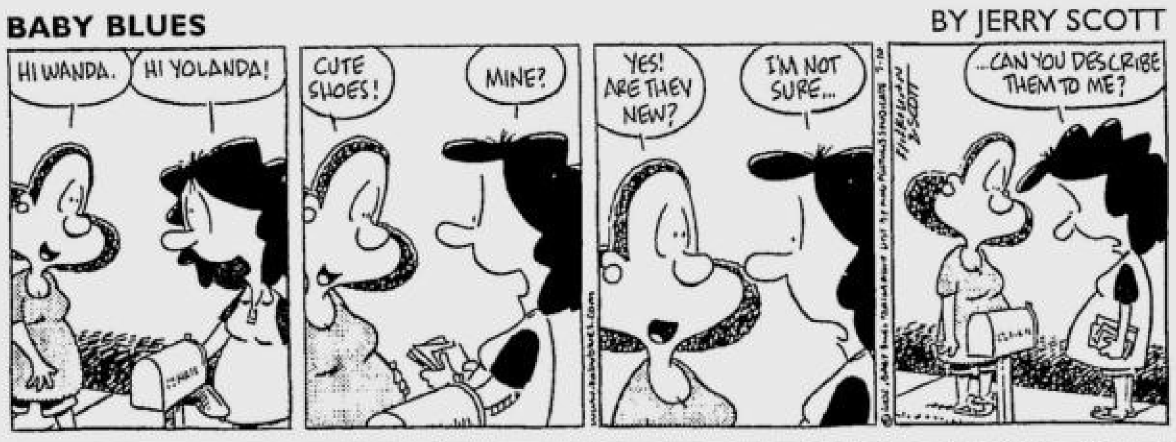
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


WHAT'S THIS, HAWTHORNE?
I'M OPENING UP A CONVENIENCE STORE.
COMING SOON HAWMART
SOMETHING SMALL AND FRIENDLY, JUST FOR OUR NEIGHBORHOOD.
YOU KNOW, A REAL MOM & POP KIND OF PLACE, HOMEY.
SO, WOULD HE BE MOM OR POP?
HE'S THE UNCLE THAT STEALS YOUR SILVERWARE.
http://www.slagoon.com

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


HI WANDA.
HI YOLANDA!
CUTE SHOES!
MINE?
YES! ARE THEY NEW?
I'M NOT SURE...
...CAN YOU DESCRIBE THEM TO ME?

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Sue Lyon, Arlo Guthrie, David Brinkley, Jean Kerr

Happy Birthday: Your interest is in helping others this year. You can move into a position of leadership. Make friends with individuals who are in a position of power. If you are single, romance will surface through the company you keep and the groups you join. If you are attached, you will see your relationship in a new light. Your numbers are 10, 14, 23, 25, 32, 41

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Get your chores out of the way so you won't hear complaints about the way you do things. You will not be in the mood to deal with the emotional drama today.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Do something with friends or consider taking a mini trip to a place you really enjoy. Good conversation will make your day and inspire you for the things that you want to do in the future.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): You will be called upon to help someone today. Use your expertise to solve problems and to deal with issues that may have something to do with your past.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You will be prone to overreacting to personal issues, so take a reasonable amount of time to think things through. Focus on home, family and doing what's best for you.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): There appears to be something going on behind the scenes that could make a difference to your future direction. This isn't the day to sit back and be lazy. Someone is probably watching you, so do your best.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Follow your instincts. Don't push your ideas on others or you are likely to face opposition. If you are complimentary, you will get a much better response.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Someone may try to get the better of you today. You'll have to be on your toes to avoid any backlash. Focus on what you do best and don't be too shy to speak up.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You should try to travel for business today. You will be a great communicator, so don't just listen—ask questions and contribute your thoughts.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): This could turn out to be a good money day for you if you are smart with your cash. Don't let someone who is afraid to make a move ruin your plans. You must make your own decisions.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You can expect to have a problem dealing with partners today. If you are accommodating, you will find it much easier to cope with the people around you. For now it's best to compromise.

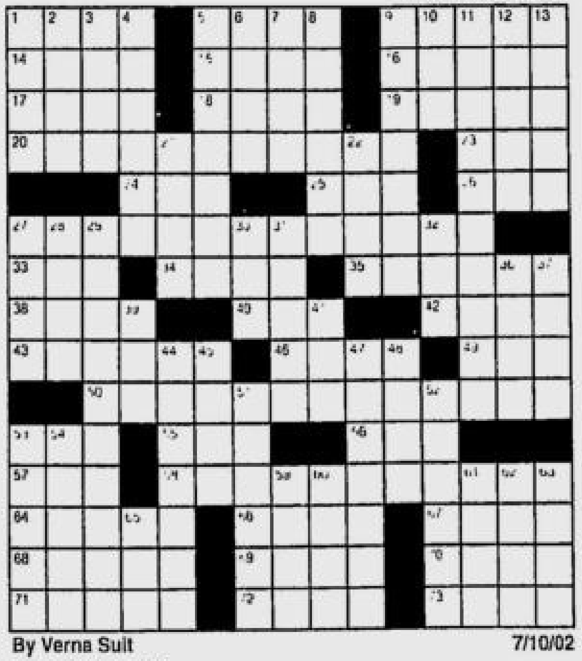
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Let your ideas be known. Anything that is work-related will turn out exceptionally well today, so don't hold back. Expand your knowledge by doing a little research.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Take time to do things with the younger people in your life. It is important to spend some time developing your creative side. You should be looking into hobbies that interest you.

Birthday Baby: You were born with grace, class and good manners. You know how to act properly in order to gain popularity. You will play well with others right from day one.

DAILY CROSSWORD

IMSPuzzles@aol.com



By Verna Suit
Silver Spring, MD

7/10/02

ACROSS
1 Quote as an authority
5 Escaped
9 Belt place
14 Keyed up
15 Top-notch
16 Comic Kovacs
17 Attenuated
18 Labels
19 Tantalize
20 Paris potatoes
23 Forbid
24 Spanish cheer
25 Wildebeest
26 Stallone, to friends
27 Brussels vegetable
33 Tell's canton
34 Nose alert
35 Work shifts
38 Shoot wide
40 Triumph
42 Command to Fido
43 Stormy sea bird
46 Robin Cook thriller
49 "The __ of the Sixth Happiness"
50 Warsaw wurst
53 Black goo
55 Cicero's lang.
56 R-V contents
57 Troy, NY sch.
58 Dublin drink
64 Flip a lid off
66 Dog's bane
67 Permeate
68 Oozes
69 Lascivious look
70 Important times
71 Gustatory sensation
72 Icelandic poem
73 Philosopher Descartes

DOWN
1 Baby elephant
2 Borodin's prince
3 Sound quality
4 Rich drink
5 Sax player David Newman's nickname
6 Bread purchase
7 Art print: abbr.
8 Configuration
9 Cousteau costume
10 TV classic, "You __ There"
11 While not present
12 Rope fiber
13 Really small
21 Muse of history
22 Tips
27 Nudge
28 HOMES part
29 Sticker figures
30 Forthwith
31 Novelist Segal
32 Island off the Dalmatian coast
36 Astronaut's drink
37 "Auld Lang __"
39 Brief sign of a hit
41 Negatives
44 Plane curve
45 Truth stretcher
47 Eyelash cosmetic
48 Graph or harp starter
51 Smother
52 Put up with
53 Expect loyalty
54 Stoppage of breathing
59 Winter transportation
60 Listen to
61 Conflagration
62 Impetuous ardor
63 So what __ is new?
65 Fitting

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved

S	N	A	P	S	■	S	A	L	T	■	O	S	L	O
H	A	B	I	T	■	I	S	A	R	■	C	A	I	N
O	P	E	N	A	N	D	S	H	U	T	C	A	S	E
T	E	T	■	N	O	O	N	■	N	E	U	R	A	L
■	■	■	O	D	I	N	■	S	C	A	R	■	■	■
R	E	P	A	I	R	■	C	L	A	M	■	P	B	A
A	M	A	S	S	■	S	L	I	T	■	B	R	A	N
F	O	R	T	H	E	T	I	M	E	B	E	I	N	G
E	T	E	S	■	L	A	N	E	■	R	E	E	D	S
R	E	D	■	T	E	S	T	■	B	A	R	D	O	T
■	■	■	A	R	C	H	■	D	O	G	S	■	■	■
C	L	O	S	E	T	■	P	I	N	G	■	B	A	S
H	O	P	S	K	I	P	A	N	D	A	J	U	M	P
E	R	T	E	■	V	I	L	E	■	R	A	M	I	E
R	E	S	T	■	E	E	L	S	■	T	Y	P	E	D

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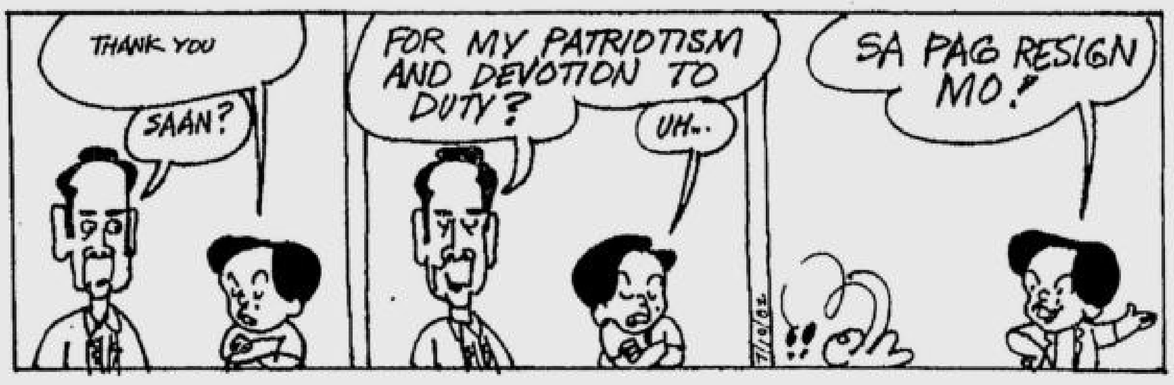
7/10/02

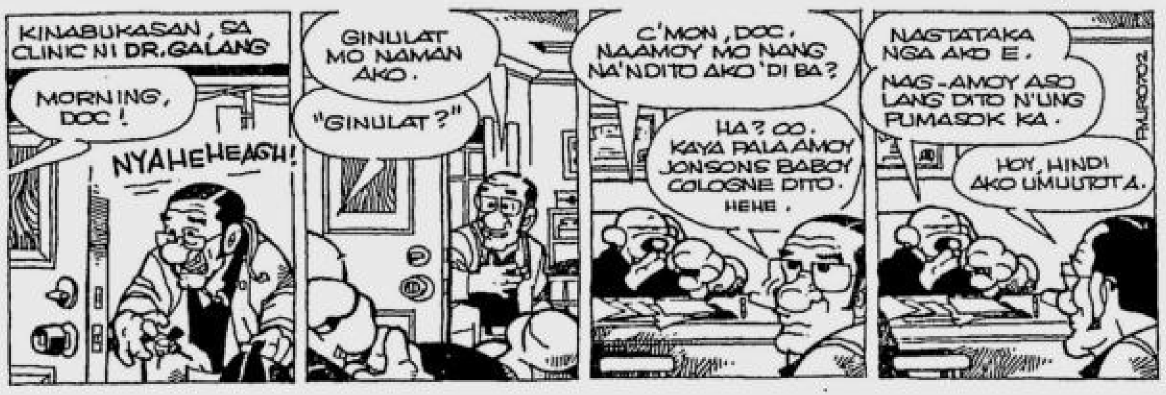
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


THANK YOU
SAAN?
FOR MY PATRIOTISM AND DEVOTION TO DUTY?
UH..
SA PAG RESIGN MO!
7/10/02

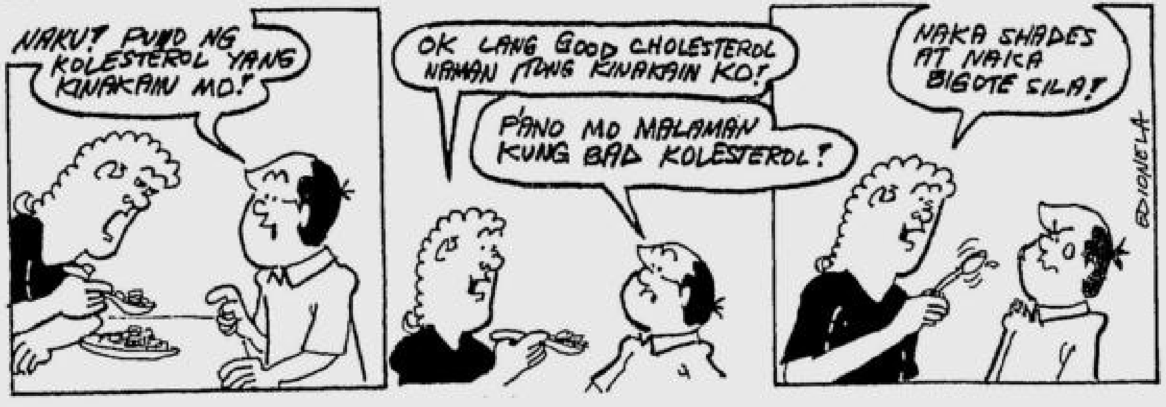
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


KINABUKASAN, SA CLINIC NI DR. GALANG
MORNING, DOC!
NYAHEHEAGH!
GINULAT MO NAMAN AKO.
"GINULAT?"
C'MON, DOC, NAAMOY MO NANG NA'NDITO AKO 'DI BA?
HA? OO. KAYA PALA AMOY JONSONS BABOY COLOGNE DITO. HEHE.
NAGTATAKA NGA AKO E.
NAG-AMOY ASO LANG DITO N'UNG PUMASOK KA.
HOY, HINDI AKO UMUUTOT A.

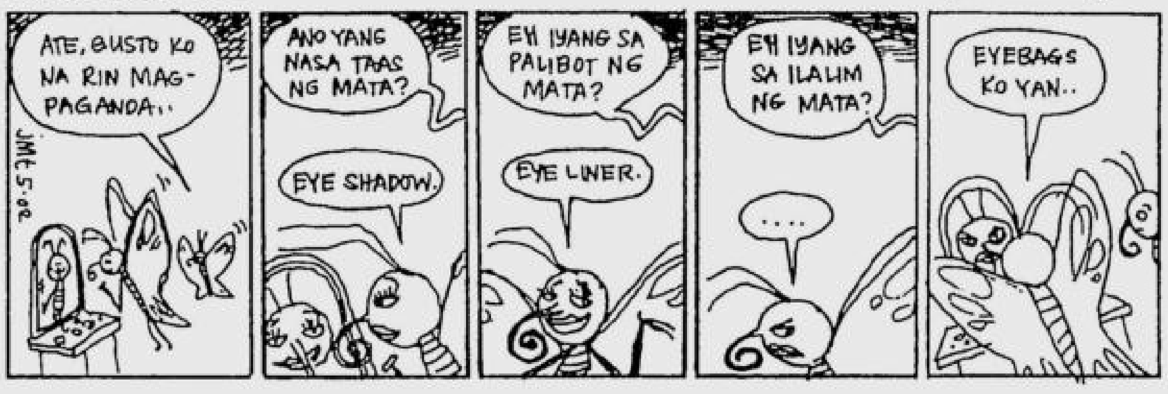
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


NAKU! PUNO NG KOLESTEROL YANG KINAKAIN MO!
OK LANG GOOD CHOLESTEROL NAMAN ITONG KINAKAIN KO!
P'ANO MO MALAMAN KUNG BAD KOLESTEROL?
NAKA SHADES AT NAKA BIGOTE SILA!
EDIONELA

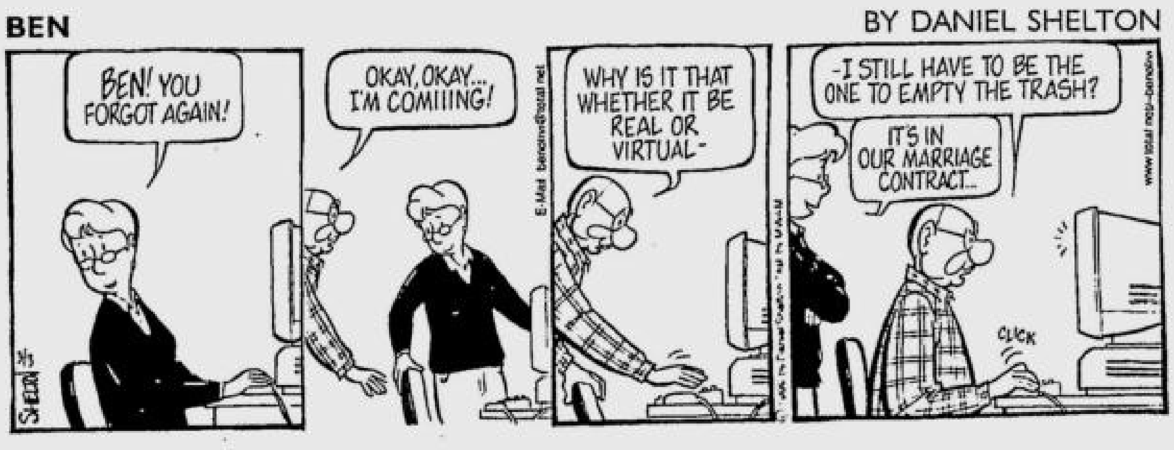
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


ATE, GUSTO KO NA RIN MAG-PAGANDA..
ANO YANG NASA TAAS NG MATA?
EYE SHADOW.
EH IYANG SA PALIBOT NG MATA?
EYE LINER.
EH IYANG SA ILALIM NG MATA?
....
EYEBAGS KO YAN..

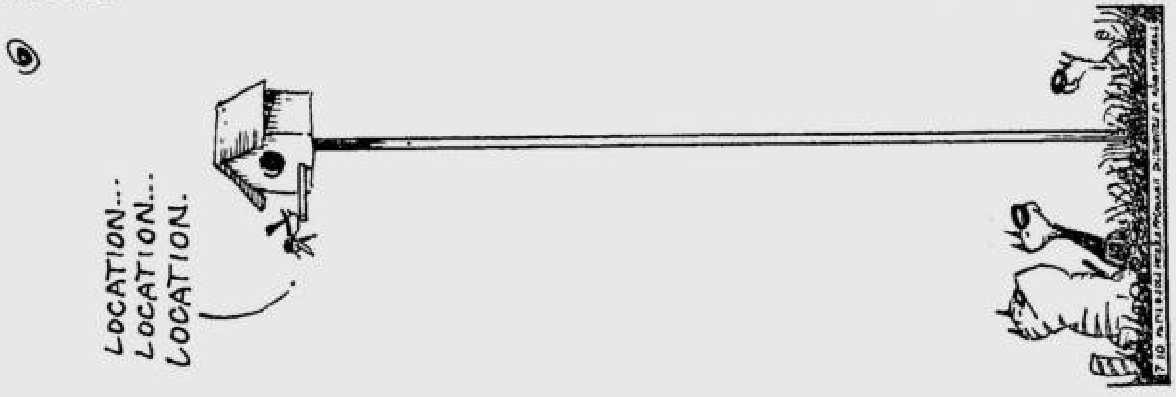
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


BEN! YOU FORGOT AGAIN!
OKAY, OKAY... I'M COMIIING!
WHY IS IT THAT WHETHER IT BE REAL OR VIRTUAL-
-I STILL HAVE TO BE THE ONE TO EMPTY THE TRASH?
IT'S IN OUR MARRIAGE CONTRACT...
CLICK

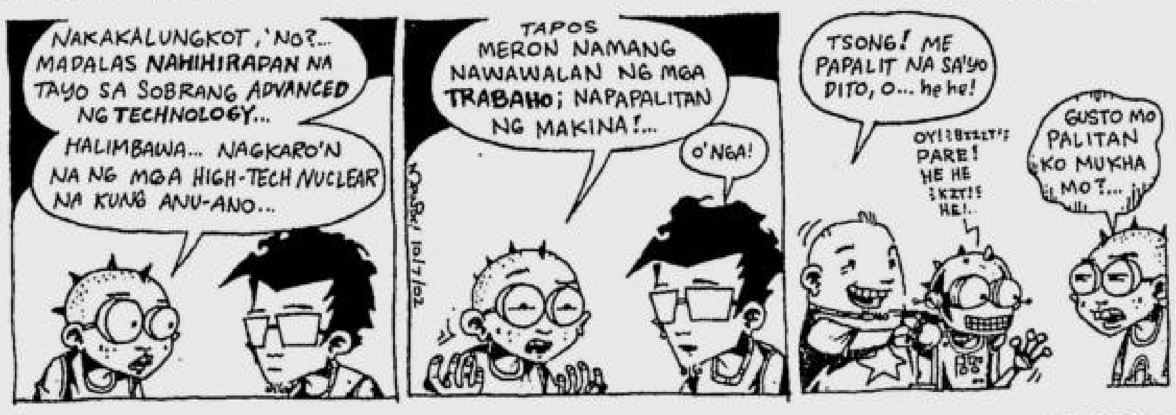
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


LOCATION... LOCATION... LOCATION.

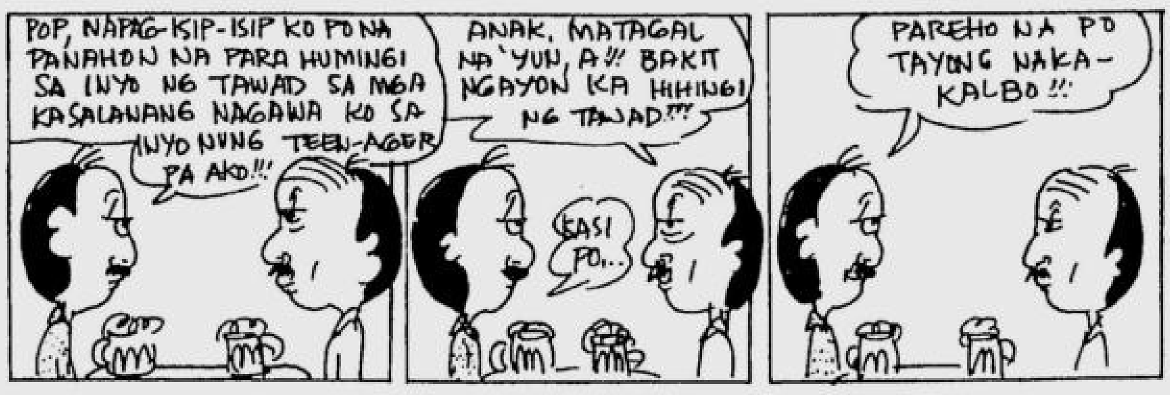
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


NAKAKALUNGKOT, 'NO?... MADALAS NAHIHIRAPAN NA TAYO SA SOBRANG ADVANCED NG TECHNOLOGY...
HALIMBAWA... NAGKARO'N NA NG MGA HIGH-TECH NUCLEAR NA KUNG ANU-ANO...
TAPOS MERON NAMANG NAWAWALAN NG MGA TRABAHO; NAPAPALITAN NG MAKINA!...
O'NGA!
TSONG! ME PAPALIT NA SA'YO DITO, O... he he!
OY! PARE! HE HE HE!
GUSTO MO PALITAN KO MUKHA MO?...

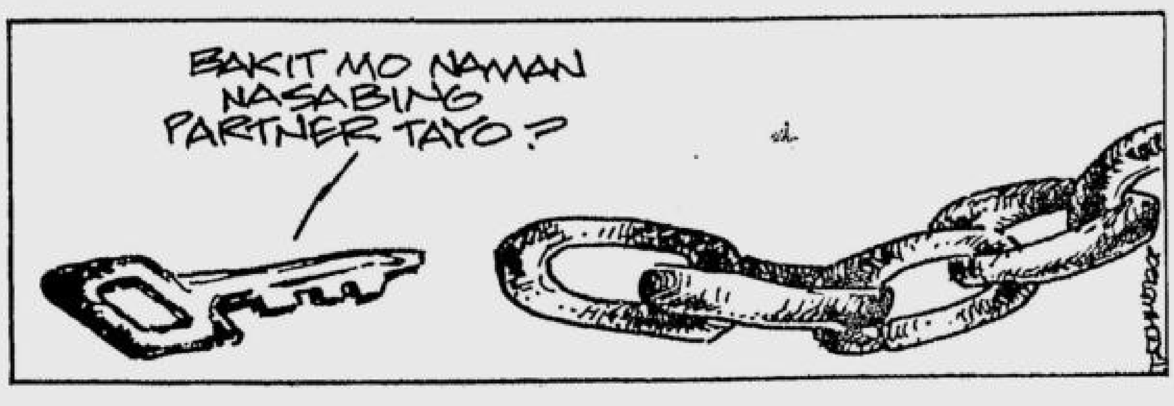
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


POP, NAPAG-ISIP-ISIP KO PO NA PANAHON NA PARA HUMINGI SA INYO NG TAWAD SA MGA KASALANANG NAGAWA KO SA INYO NUNG TEEN-AGER PA AKO!!!
ANAK, MATAGAL NA 'YUN, A!!! BAKIT NGAYON KA HIHINGI NG TAWAD???
KASI PO...
PAREHO NA PO TAYONG NAKA-KALBO!!!

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


BAKIT MO NAMAN NASABING PARTNER TAYO?

I sat at the concert altar of Britney Spears

From page D1

tionship with N'Sync's Justin Timberlake, hitting international news, and with her navel-baring outfits constantly making news. Who wouldn't be impressed with all that she has accomplished?

I had seen her perform on TV at the American Music Awards, the Grammys, the 2000 MTV Video Music Awards and the 2001 MTV Video Music Awards. I had also seen her concert in Hawaii and her latest HBO special, "Britney Live in Las Vegas." Now I was actually going to see her live!

Mini program

After waiting for her to go onstage for an hour and a half, listening to the all-girl opening act 3rd Phase, and watching a mini-program of Britney on a 50-ft screen, fireworks exploded on stage and Britney appeared, suspended on a circular crane, while singing "Oops! I Did It Again." The audience went wild as they watched her turn sideways and upside down, and then the rest of her dancers appeared. All eyes were glued on her muscular figure as she gyrated to the music. She was everything I had expected and more; not only did she look like the regular girl-next-door with a charming smile, but she also had the figure of a regular girl (toned, and not waif-thin). She looked so "normal" and perhaps that was what made her so alluring.

Performing simultaneous dance moves with her back-up dancers, Britney greeted the audience and started dancing to her other songs. Suspended on a high-rise platform, she and her dancers gyrated to "I Love Rock 'n' Roll." While singing "Stronger," they appeared in all-black spandex outfits and danced on chairs, while huge screens on both sides of the United Center played the corresponding music video.

The audience was riveted on Britney as she emerged from a life-size music box in a white ballerina outfit as she sang "I Was Born to Make You Happy." She then removed her tutu and replaced it with a white fur coat to sing "Lucky"; her back-up dancers were in red, white and blue sequined outfits and top hats. When the song finished, confetti streamed down from the top of the United Center. The audience cheered, and Britney emerged on an elevated plane in hot neon pants, singing "I Love Rock 'n' Roll." The amazon-green outfit was similar to the one she wore in the 2001 MTV Video Music Awards. She sang "I'm A Slave 4 U" while her dancers gyrated in animal cages. She later emerged in an all-black outfit for "You Drive Me (Crazy)," "Boys" and "Bombastic Love."

New songs

Britney sang new songs, "Anticipating" and "Cinderella," from her latest album, while in a pink car and in a rainbow-bright outfit. Her dancers sat in the backseat.

She emerged in an elegant white ball gown to sing her ballads, "When I Found You" and "I'm Not a Girl, Not Yet a Woman."

When she performed "Don't Go Knockin' on My Door," a huge video wall appeared with another "Britney" mimicking her every move. She sang her other hits—"Sometimes," "Soda Pop," "Don't Let Me Be the Last to Know"—and cuts from her latest album—"Let Me Be," "I Run Away" and "What It's Like To Be Me."

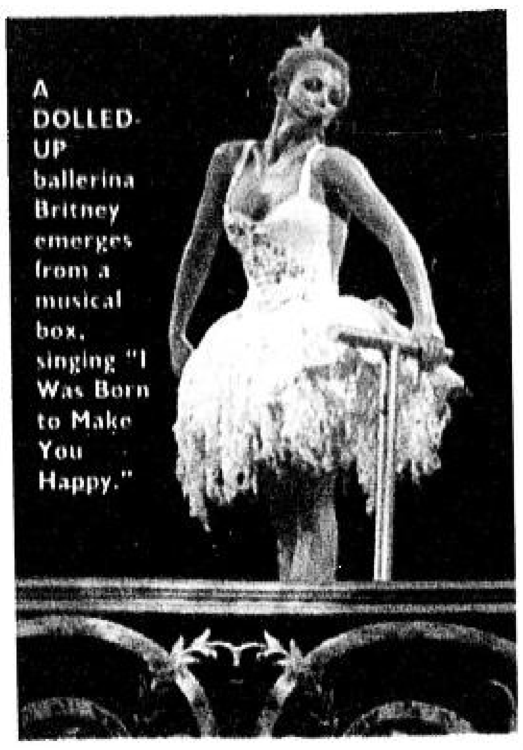
She ended the concert with "(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction" and joined hands with her dancers for the curtain call. The audience clamored for more, and screamed until everyone's throats was hoarse.

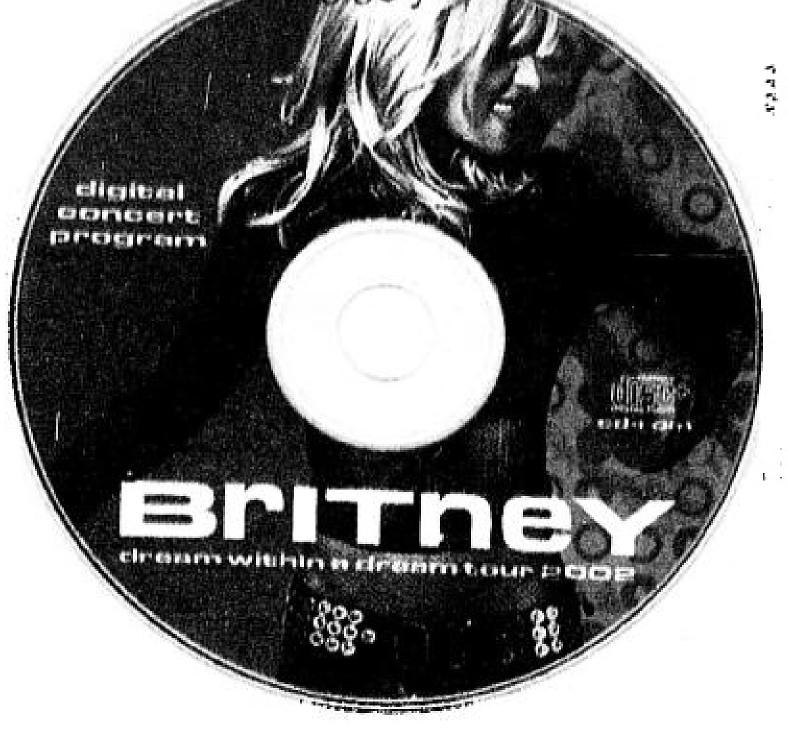
Finally, Britney and her dancers reemerged on an elevated crane singing "... Baby One More Time" as rain poured down on them from the top of the arena. The audience went wild, as a very wet Britney approached the audience clad in tight black shorts and a bikini top.

The whole concert was reminiscent of a New Year's Eve celebration, complete with synchronized strobe lights, fireworks, confetti and flying trapeze artists.

Before leaving the stage, Britney blew kisses to her adoring audience, and shouted, "Chicago, you rock!"

I had seen Britney Spears in the flesh with her concert exceeding my grandest expectations. Not only was it the best concert I had ever seen, it also reinforced my belief that Britney Spears was both the girl-next-door and the world's biggest superstar.


A DOLLED-UP ballerina Britney emerges from a musical box, singing "I Was Born to Make You Happy."



BRITNEY sings "Bombastic Love" with her backup dancers.

THE AUTHOR shows off her concert pass in front of the United Center in Chicago.

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Who is your icon?

By Niño Mark M. Sablan
2bU! Correspondent

ICONS. We bow before them and utter, "I'm not worthy." We carefully cut out their pictures from crumpled newspapers and buy expensive magazines that contain news about them, especially when they're on the cover. We copy their way of dressing up and try to look, sound and smell like them. We buy the products they buy. We buy what they endorse. We buy anything related to them. We hyperventilate when we see their armpits or ankles. We cry after their every award-winning performance. We scream like Regine when they're on TV. We feign excitement when we see them buying briefs in a department store. We believe every word they say. We subscribe to their beliefs. We draw inner strength and inspiration from them.

We are the fans, they are our gods. Here is a list of some crazed fanatics. This is their three seconds of fame.

I've built a shrine for Diane Warren because she's made many great songs anyone could relate to.—**Mackee, 23, Metropop and Himig Handog reject**

Bjork's my goddess. I adore her for her guts to wear swans and jump on reporters. Plus she's an amazing songwriter.—**Rogelio C., 20, can't wear swans**

GEORGE Harrison is my icon. The "quiet Beatle" spent his life creating beautiful music and honoring the Lord.—Chris Cristobal

MY ex-girlfriend Carmen, because she's hardworking, patient, sweet and a lot more. She's really special. An icon!—Gian, 22

Cate Blanchett and Gwyneth Paltrow are amazing because they portray their roles perfectly.—**Beth Vergara, 22, aspiring actress**

Poppy Z. Brite because of her amazing descriptive skills.—**Lyra Samson, 17, indescribable (*daw*)**

Flower Pot Girls.—**Claire Mae Jaula, joking**

I idolize Cynthia Alexander for her unparalleled skills in music playing and songwriting.—**April Banzon, 24, insomniac**

Zafra's a goddess. Flawless, imperfect.—**Kleng-kleng, 23, flawful and imperfect**

Yoyoy Villame.—**Toto, 24, law student**

Carrie Bradshaw's my icon, not Sarah Jessica Parker.—**Budoy, 14, wants his own Mr. Big**

Jackie Lou Blanco, because she has reinvented herself.—**Igay, 23, impressed with Jackie Lou's acting in the latest Carne Norte ad**

MY icons would be Angelina Jolie because she's a really good actress, wild and sexy and full of action. Epitome of a modern woman; Milla Jovovich, a model and great actress, a singer and songwriter... what more could you ask for?—Matet, 18

REM's Michael Stipe is someone I look up to because he writes really sad songs plus he's gay.—**Blair, 18, writes songs and is gay**

My mom's my icon. I salute her for doing an excellent job raising five wicked children.—**Cleofe, 19, about to be a mom soon**

Madonna, the queen of reinvention. She's phenomenal even if she's not really beautiful or extremely talented.—**Stephen B., 20**

Mariah Carey is my icon when it comes to songwriting. Many people are unaware of how better she is as a songwriter than as a singer.—**Joel O., 22, closet Carey fan, now out in the open**

Si Juday *ang* idol *ko. Ang galing-galing kasi umarte lalo na ngayong ang payat-payat na niya. Mapa-"Ula, Ang Batang Gubat" o "Magkapatid," ang galing galing niya talaga!*—**Cajulao, 20, obviously a Juday fan**

My one and only idol is Mr. Pure Energy himself, Gary V., because I like his attitude towards life and how he handles his career and family. I like the way he performs onstage and how he never forgets to thank the Lord.—**Jennifer Arteta, 22, Ms Pure Energy**

RICO Yan, because at a very young age, he already had the desire of helping the youth and thinking of the good of the community. And I think those are the traits that make him a "whattaman"—Joseph, 21

I really admire Princess Diana because of her generous heart. She engaged in humanitarian acts and helped so many people especially young children. She was the people's princess.—**Myra Cadayona, 24, UPHR SSC business manager**

Lea Salonga, because she is an outstanding performer, an internationally-acclaimed artist, a role model for the youth, an achiever, and she's proud to be a Filipino.—**Teresa Bobares, 23, hopes to win the lotto so she can watch Lea's concert and treat her friends**

Daria and Robert Smith.—**Pao, still angst-ridden**

Bob Marley, because his songs are universal, timeless and heartfelt. His music changed my life.—**Michael del Rosario, 20, has a huge crush on Maui**

Donita, because she has a good soul, and J.Lo, because of her perfect "guitar" body and mesmerizing voice.—**Nell Ednaco, 19, adores Brandon Boyd**

Adam Garcia of "Coyote Ugly" is one of my favorite actors. He's cute but what strikes me most is how he portrays his roles naturally.—**Rosalie Mondero, can sing and dance gracefully just like Adam**

Who else? The reason for my being of course! The one I live for...whom I would also readily die for. My one and only Savior, also my best friend. Surely, you don't need an explanation...I mean, come on! (rolls eyes and then smiles).—**Jasmin Mate, can't wait to be 20, self-admitted Jesus freak**

My Dad.—**Jerome, 18**

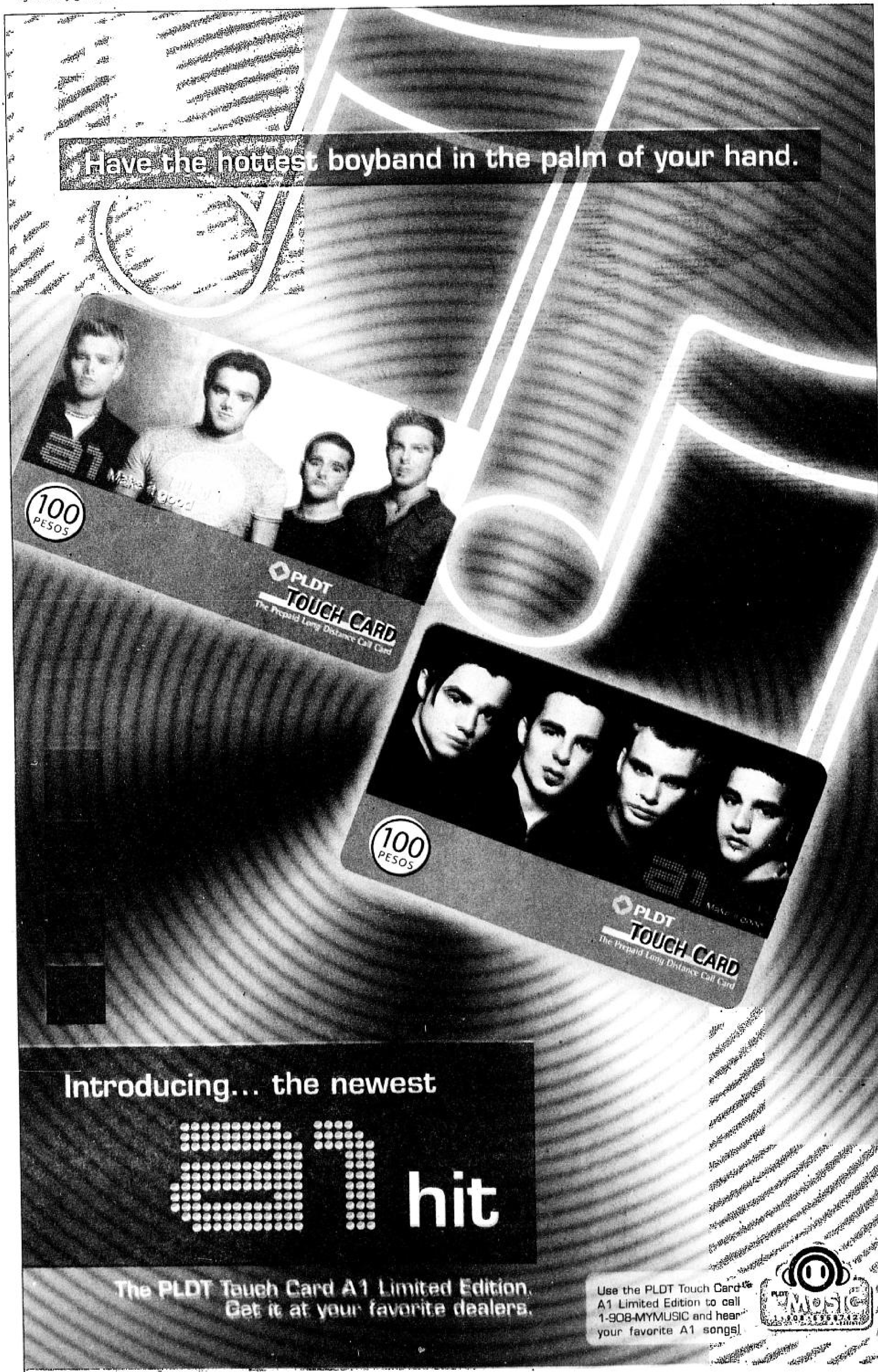
Michael Jordan. Because of him, a lot of people want to get into basketball and merchandising.—**RJ, 16**

Kurt Cobain. God bless his soul.—**Marty, 16**

Icon *ko si* Aiza Seguerra. *Parang* living proof *siya na* child stars can be still successful after puberty.—**Lenny, 22**

A lot actually... Andy Warhol, Tado, Darth Vader, Audrey Hepburn, Imelda Marcos, Col. Sanders...but my favorites of the moment would be Thom Yorke, because his music and band is the greatest thing since sliced bread, and he's the only one who can make misery look cool. And Johnny Knoxville of the MTV Jackass, the ultimate King of Pain.—**Tammy, 19, UA&P**

With reports from Tammy David



Have the hottest boyband in the palm of your hand.
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How to use the PLDT Touch Card:
Step 1: Scratch off the silver strip at the back to reveal the card number and activation code.
Step 2: Dial 101-74 from any PLDT landline, payphone, or Smart or Piltel cellphone.
Step 3: Listen to the voice prompts. Enter your card number followed by the # sign. For first time users,when instructed, enter activation code.
Step 4: For local and domestic calls, dial 0 +area code+tel.no.+ #. For international calls, dial 00 +country code+area code+tel.no.+ #. For MYMusic, just dial 1-908-MYMUSIC.

(*See User's Guide for other Access Numbers and additional instructions.)
PLDT Touch Cards are available in all PLDT Business Offices, LBC stations, SM Malls, 7-11 outlets, I-mart, and other authorized dealers nationwide.

PLDT
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